Carry Water, Lug Firewood: Dōgen's Dialectical Standpoint on "Dropping off Body and Mind"

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Abstract

This paper examines Zen Master Dōgen's philosophy of *shinjin datsuraku*, dropping off body and mind, through his dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā*. In our efforts, we shall learn of the philosophical affinities Dōgen shares with early *Mahāyāna* thinkers, particularly Nāgārjuna and his philosophy of emptiness. A demonstration of this connection will in turn open up a new conceptual window for viewing and interpreting various themes and passages within *Dōgen's* writings. Some ideas we will explore in order to frame out a dialectical discussion of *shinjin datsuraku* are the mind-body problem and its relationship to the problem of time, as well as his philosophy and practice of zazen, seated meditation.

Following from this examination, we will then probe Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku.* In our attempt to unfold the philosophical layers of meaning that encapsulate this teaching, we will provide a novel reading of his philosophy of Buddha-nature, a philosophy that is free from all traces of essentialism.

Résumé

Le présent mémoire examine la philosophie du *shinjin datsuraku*--"laisser tomber le corps et l'esprit"--du maître zen Dōgen au moyen de son regard dialectique sur *sunyata*. En particulier, nous mettrons en lumière les affinités philosophiques que Dōgen partage avec certains théoriciens indiens du *Mahāyana*, plus spécifiquement avec Nāgārjuna et sa philosophie de la vacuité. En démontrant cette connection, nous découvrirons de nouvelles pistes d'interprétation de certains thèmes et passages des écrits de Dōgen. Le mémoire construit une interprétation dialectique de *shinjin datsuraku* en explorant entre autres sujets le problème de la dualité corps-esprit et sa relation au problème du temps, ainsi que la philosophie du *zazen*, la méditation assise, et les recommandations de Dōgen à ce sujet.

Nous sondons ensuite l'approche dialectique que Dōgen adopte face au *shinjin datsuraku*. Dans le but de révéler les différents niveaux de sens compris dans cette doctrine, nous développons une nouvelle interprétation de sa pensée de la nature-de-bouddha, que nous présentons comme étant dénuée de toute trace d'essentialisme.

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Introduction

Of the scholars who have studied Zen Master Dōgen, such as Hee Jin Kim and Masao Abe, most agree that the importance of Dōgen's expression *shinjin datsuraku*, or "casting off body-mind," must not be underestimated for two reasons. On the one hand, it is the expression Ch'an master Ju-ching used to authenticate Dōgen's enlightenment experience in China (Heine 91).

> In Ju-ching's private quarters in the same morning Dōgen offered incense and worshipped Buddha. At this unusual action on the part of Dōgen, Ju-ching asked: "What is the incense-burning for?" The disciple exuberantly answered: "My body and mind are cast off!" "The body and mind are cast off" (*shinjin datsuraku*) joined the master, "cast off are the body and mind" (*datsuraku shinjin*). Thus Ju-ching acknowledged the authenticity of Dōgen's enlightenment. (Kim, 44)

On the other, following this event and having received the official certificate of the patriarchal transmission, Dōgen continued to use the expression *shinjin datsuraku* throughout a good many chapters of his *magnus opus*, *Shōbōgenzō*, as a way of characterizing zazen, the nature of enlightenment and Buddha-nature. For example, in his essay *Genjō Kōan* Dōgen states that:

> To learn the Buddha's truth is to learn ourselves. To learn ourselves is to forget ourselves. To forget ourselves is to be experienced by the myriad *dharmas*. To be experienced by the myriad *dharmas* is to let our own body-and-mind, and the body-and-mind of the external world, fall away. (Nishijima, 34)

However, of these scholars, no one has yet provided a thorough explanation of the philosophical significance and meaning of *shinjin datsuraku* in light of his dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā*. Notwithstanding Kim's argument that *shinjin datsuraku* is Dōgen's unique way of expressing the non-duality of subject and object, "The body-mind totality is at last free from dualistic shackles and hence free from duality – that is, the

body-mind is now authentically able to deal with self and the world. This is the meaning of the body-mind cast off (*shinjin datsuraku*)" (Kim, 133), or Abe's that *shinjin datsuraku* is the moment in zazen where one realizes Buddha-nature, "For Dōgen it is the "immaculate" Buddha-nature that is realized in zazen, sitting meditation, which he calls "the casting off of body-mind" (*shinjin-datsuraku*)" (Abe, 65), the objective of this study is to examine the philosophical import of *shinjin datsuraku* by thoroughly exploring Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā* (i.e. A is ~A therefore A is A).

Dialectical reasoning is a method of logic which is predicated on the contention that if we are thoroughgoing in our analysis of phenomenal things, events or concepts, our conclusions about such will fall into a set of contradictions. In Buddhism, particularly *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, dialectical logic was a choice method for extending the Buddha's teaching of no-self to the point where all things were understood to be empty (Skt. *śūnya*) of an inherent self-nature, including emptiness itself (Skt. *śūnyatā śūnyatā*). For example, in the *Vajracchedikā, "Diamond Sūtra,"* it reads:

> When, *Subhuti*, you consider the number of particles of dust in the world system of 1,000 million worlds – would they be many? – *Subhuti* replied: Yes, O Lord. Because what was taught as particles of dust by the *Tathāgata,* as no particles that was taught by the *Tathāgata*. Therefore they are called "particles of dust." And this world-system the *Tathāgata* has taught as no-system. Therefore it is called a world system." (Conze, 50)

In Dōgen's writings, this dialectical style is most clearly expressed in his essay *Genjō Kōan*.

> When all dharmas are [seen as] the Buddha-Dharma, then there is delusion and realization, there is practice, there is life and there is death, there are buddhas and there are ordinary beings. When the myriad dharmas are each not of the self, there is no delusion and no realization, no buddhas and no ordinary beings, no life and no death. The Buddha's truth is originally transcendent over abundance and scarcity, and so there is life and death, there is delusion and realization, there are

> beings and buddhas. And though it is like this, it is only that flowers while loved, fall; and weeds, while hated, flourish. (Nishijima, 33)

By appropriating this dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā* as a lens for examining the philosophical import of *shinjin datsuraku,* we shall accomplish four things: 1) recognize Dōgen's affinities with *Mādhyamaka* thought, particularly Nāgārjuna's dialectic of emptiness; 2) get clear on his dialectical philosophy of body, mind and time; 3) understand the significance of his philosophy of zazen, which is the practice by which one casts off body-and mind; 4) and provide a novel reading of Buddha-nature which is free from any and all traces of essentialism.

For the sake of clarifying the stages in my argument, I have divided this paper into six chapters. Chapter One introduces us to the philosophy of Buddha-nature as is presented by *Tathāgata-garbha* thought. Here we will examine the philosophical problems that Dōgen detected in the teaching, particularly that of the duality of practice and attainment, and the duality of delusion and enlightenment. In doing so, we will be able to capture a historical glimpse of Dōgen as a monk/scholar.

In Chapter Two, by providing an account of some of the hermeneutical issues surrounding our reading of Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō,* we shall begin examining Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā.* Here we shall see how Dōgen's dialectical standpoint is an extension of Nāgārjuna's philosophy of emptiness of emptiness. The connection between these two thinkers will be proven to be significant in Chapter Three as we examine select passages from the *Shōbōgenzō,* and thus query the manner by which Dōgen seeks to establish a middle way between essentialism and nihilism through his reflections on mind, body and time. These investigations are noteworthy to Dōgen's

overall project for they supply the theoretical architecture for considering the subject matters in both Chapters Four and Five.

Chapter Four provides an investigation into Dōgen's philosophy of zazen (i.e. turning back the radiance, *ekō henshō*) and its relationship with *shinjin datsuraku.* Here we shall clarify Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku* by exploring his non-dual philosophy of turning back the radiance and/or non-thinking which is pivotal to his reflections on zazen.

Following from such inquiries, we shall then proceed in Chapter Five towards reconciling the problem of Buddha-nature noted in Chapter One, the duality of practice and attainment, as well as delusion and enlightenment We shall see how Dogen's standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku* provides an alternative reading of Buddha-nature which is free from the essentialistic traps of *Tathāgata-garbha* philosophy; and, how this reading overcomes the problem of practice and attainment, a problem that is directly related with the problem of mind, body and time. Then finally in Chapter Six, we shall review all the main points noted in these chapters.

Chapter One: Dōgen's Early Monastic Career

Throughout Dōgen's monastic training at Mt. Hiei, the philosophy of the Buddha-nature was a first-order concern.[1] Of the many *sūtras* and *sastras* that convey this philosophy, the ideas presented within the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* played a key role in shaping both the philosophical and soteriological ideas of East Asian schools of Buddhism, including the *Kegon* and *Tendai* schools. In this *sūtra* it states that Buddha-Nature is inherent within all sentient beings: "All sentient beings have the Buddha –nature, work out your own salvation with diligence" (Kim, 161). Thus, with diligent effort and earnest commitment to the Buddha-dharma, one can realize one's Buddha-nature and attain salvation from this worldly realm of suffering (Skt. *duhkha*) and rebirth. As Kim notes, a clear understanding of this teaching is compulsory for understanding Dōgen's Zen philosophy as is presented in the *Shōbōgenzō.*

In this chapter, we shall examine the philosophy of Buddha-nature as is interpreted by East Asian Buddhist schools, particularly *Tendai* Buddhism. In doing so, we shall consider the philosophical problems Dōgen encountered with this philosophy, particularly the duality of practice and attainment, along with delusion and enlightenment. The overall importance of this examination will prove to be significant in later chapters when we see how Dōgen uses many of the philosophical ideas within *Tathāgata-garbha* and Yogācāra thought to construct his philosophy of *shinjin datsuraku*, and thereby provide an alternative reading of Buddha-nature that is free from all traces of essentialism.

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[1] For a good historical account of Dōgen's early years as a monk, see: Hee-Jin Kim. *Dōgen Kigen - Mystical Realist*. Tuscon: The University of Arizona Press, 1975.

§1 The Problem of Inherent Buddha-nature

A child of an aristocratic family, religious life began at a very young age for Dōgen. Following the death of his parents, Dōgen abandoned a life of wealth under his uncle's supervision and became a monk at Mt. Hiei near Kyoto, which was the religious center of *Tendai* Buddhism during the Kamakura period (Tamura 99). The *Tendai* tradition developed its philosophy of Buddha-nature in light of the philosophical commitments of *Tathāgata-garbha* idealism.[2] In general, *Tathāgata-garbha* ontology states that all conditioned and unconditioned phenomena[3] do not exist independent from consciousness (Skt. *vijñāna*).[4] By appropriating the epistemological commitments from *Yogācāra*, the *Tathāgata-garbha* theorists argued that the ontological status of all existing things is rooted in the mind. By dividing the mind into eight conscious levels:

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[2] Though there has been disagreement amongst scholars, both Western and Japanese, as to whether idealism properly characterizes the *Tathāgata-garbha* school, the position which I am taking – which I believe is the position Dōgen defended - is that *Tathāgata-garbha* philosophy is idealistic in the sense that it explicitly denies that there are any extra-mental entities. This type of idealism can defined as a kind of metaphysical idealism whereby mind and/or consciousness is viewed as a non-material force which is ontologically responsible for the existence of the phenomenal world. For further reading on idealism in *Yogācāra* and *Tathāgata-garbha*, see Griffiths. And, for further reading on the different types of idealism in Buddhism, see Lusthaus.

[3] Conditioned and unconditioned are technical terms which refer to the two groups of phenomena in *Abhidharma* ontology. *Abhidharma* thinkers, such as Vasubandhu in his treatise the *Abhidharmakośa,* conceptually mapped out series of reductions, which were in turn geared towards exegetically clarifying many of the teachings of the Buddha, beginning with gross aggregates (Skt. *skandhas*), working through both the twelve *Ayatanas*, namely the six senses with their respective objects, and the eighteen *Dhatus*, which includes the twelve *Ayatanas* plus the respective cognition, and ending with *Dharmas*, seventy five to be exact, these theorists argued that the entirety of all existing things are constructed out of *Dharmas*. These *Dharmas* were considered to be the irreducible components of existence, ontologically independent of each other and thus in possession of an inherent self-essence (Skt. *svabhāva*). Conditioned *dharmas* corresponded to all things that were impermanent, momentary and thus constantly changing, and the unconditioned, namely space and the two types of cessation – cessation of ignorance through knowledge, and cessation of momentary existing things. See Streng.

[4] The interpretation presented here of Tathāgata-garbha is based upon my examination of *The Lankavatara Sūtra* and the treatise of *Great Awakening of Faith*. These two texts provide a thorough examination of the metaphysical notion of "Mind-Only" and of inherently existing Buddha-Nature as are accepted by Tathāgata-garbha thinkers. Additionally it is important to note that both of these texts occupied a central role in the monastic curriculum of both Tendai and Zen. For a more detailed examination of the ideas presented here, see: *The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahāyāna Text*. tr. D.T. Suzuki. Taipei: SMC Publishing INC. 1932, and, *The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Asvaghosha*. tr. Yoshito S. Hakeda. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.

"the five sense consciousnesses plus the mind (*manovijñāna*) – a sense which on the one hand apprehends psychic events, and on the other synthesizes experiences supplied by the other five senses – the tainted mind (*klistamanas*), and the substratum consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*; literally storehouse consciousness)" (Williams, 89), they argue that the root of delusion and enlightenment is contained within these cognitive spheres. However, unlike delusion, which is seen as a state of being that is conditioned from having dualistic views of subject and object, enlightenment is understood as the inherent nature of the mind. Here, the subject and object are non-dual. In texts such as the *Lankatavara Sūtra*, this inherent nature (i.e. Buddha-nature) is directly equated with the substratum consciousness which was characterized as being immaculately pure and permanent. For example, in the sutra it reads:

> Mahāmati, if you say there is no *tathāgata-garbha* known as the *Alayavijñāna*, there will be neither the rising nor the disappearing [of an external world of multiplicities] in the absence of the *Tathāgata-garbha* known as the *Alayavijñana.* Mahāmati, this realm of the *Tathāgata-garbha* is primarily undefiled and is beyond all speculative theories of the *Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas*, and the philosophers; but it appears to them devoid of purity, as it is soiled by external defilements. This is not the case with *Tathāgatas*, Mahāmati; with the *Tathāgatas* it is an intuitive experience as if it were an Amalaka fruit held in the palm of the hand. (Suzuki 192)

Thus, through esoteric practices and meditative rituals, all sentient beings, except for the *icchantikas* (i.e. beings who are inherently defiled) have the potential of realizing this enlightened state.

For Dōgen, this teaching was problematic for several reasons. First, Dōgen asked, "if all sentient beings inherently possess the Buddha-nature, then why is there any reason to engage in spiritual practice" (Kasulis 73).

> As I study both the exoteric and the esoteric schools of Buddhism, they maintain that man is endowed with Dharma-nature by birth. If this is the case,

> why had the Buddha's of all ages, undoubtedly in possession of enlightenment, to seek enlightenment and engage in spiritual practice? (Kasulis, 73)

While Dōgen's instruction in doctrinal study emphasized "inherent enlightenment," his training in meditation seemed to promote the idea of acquired enlightenment. If all beings are inherently Buddha, and have Buddha-nature as one's basic stuff, why must one practice? Why is it that we do not realize our inherent nature from the start? In light of such questioning, and given that the teaching argues that Buddha-nature is an inherent element that enables practitioners to become Buddha, the teaching itself appears to be logically inconsistent with the Buddha's teaching of no-self.

> One thing anyway is clear. The *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* teaches a really existing, permanent element (Tibetan: *yang dag khams*) in sentient beings. It is this element which enables sentient beings to become Buddhas. It is beyond egotistic self-grasping – indeed the very opposite of self-grasping – but it otherwise fulfils several of the requirements of a Self in the Indian tradition. (Williams, 99)

For Dōgen, to state that Buddha-nature exists inherently, but is only realized through ritual practices, creates a dualism between practice and attainment. This dualism seems to presuppose that Buddha-nature is a thing that can be affirmed somewhere in time and in space, and, whose affirmation is distinct from all other conventional things or affirmations.

Determined to understand and settle these issues, Dōgen left the *Tendai* order at Mt. Hiei in search of other schools of Buddhism. Arriving at *Kennin-ji* monastery, Dōgen began studying *zazen*, seated meditation, under the monastic guidance of Master Yōsai, founder of the *Rinzai* Zen sect in Japan. However, dissatisfied with the socio-political and spiritual climate that surrounded the *Rinzai* order at *Kennin-ji*, as well as the greater body of Kamakura Buddhism in general, Dōgen left Japan and sailed to China in

search of what he characterized as the "the roots of Zen."[5] Upon his arrival in China, Dōgen began traveling to various *Ch'an* temples in search of a teacher. His travels took him to some of the largest *Ch'an* temples throughout all of Sung China, many of which housed up to 1500 monks. Despite the number of monastic centers, Dōgen had trouble finding a monastic community which he thought could help him answer his questions on inherent Buddha-nature. However, after a year long search, Dōgen began studying at the Mt. *T'ien-t'ung* monastery, and it is there, under the tutelage of Ju-ching, that Dōgen received transmission.

§2 The Ts'ao-tung Lineage and Shinjin Datsuraku

The *Ts'ao-tung*, or Japanese *Sōtō*, tradition carries its dharma lineage from Bodhidharma (5th-6th cent.) to Eihei Dōgen (13th century). Ju-ching (12th-13th centuries) is the 27th patriarch of this lineage. His reputation is describes him as "peerless master in Zen Buddhism," whose "educational method reflected disciplinary rigor and monastic asceticism" (Kim, 39). For example, Dōgen writes in his essay *Zuimonki*:

> When I stayed at the *T'ien-t'ung* monastery, I saw that Ju-ching, accompanied by other elders in the monks' hall, used to practice zazen until eleven o'clock in the evening and start it towards dawn as early as two-thirty or three; and this he never failed to practice even a single night. (Kim, 39)

Ju-ching opposed the sectarian spirit of Zen. His religious standpoint was simple, namely to realize the Buddha-dharma through zazen-only (J. *Shikan-taza*), and to express such

[5] It is important to note that during the Kamakura period, Zen temples, such as *Kennin-ji*, were still under the philosophical and ritual influence of Tendai Buddhism. Because of this influence, some scholars, such as Hee Jin Kim, suggest that it is due to such influence that Dōgen left for China in search of what some would like to call a "pure form of Zen." However, we must be careful how we interpret such characterizations for they have the potential of essentializing Zen apart from the philosophical ideas of other Buddhist schools. This anti-textual depiction of Zen has been, and remains a heated issue till this day amongst various Zen communities, both in the Asia and North America, and Buddhist scholars. We will be returning to this issue of anti-textual Zen in Chapter Two when examine Dōgen's philosophy of Zen as expressed in the *Shōbōgenzō.*

realization through one's daily affairs of eating, cleaning, defecating and sleeping. For Ju-ching, such expression is itself casting off one's body and mind (J. *shinjin datsuraku)*.

The term *shinjin datsuraku* consists of two compound words. The first, *shinjin,* literally means "body/mind," and the second, *datsuraku,* which can be subdivided further into *datsu* and *raku*, means "to remove" and "to let fall" or "to let scatter" (Heine, 91). When interpreted in light of the foundational tenets of Buddhism, the first term, *shinjin*, alludes to the idea that our existence in the world as we know it hinges upon our body and mind. In early Buddhist thought, this idea provided a lens for thinking about the Four Noble truths, particularly the truth of the cause of suffering and truth of cessation. Herein, one's existential discomfort in the world, and ability to overcome such, was centered upon one's psycho-physical identity. To get a clear idea on the role *shinjin datsuraku* plays in Dōgen's Zen, we shall turn our attention to the *Shōbōgenzō*.

Chapter Two: The *Shōbōgenzō* Landscape and *Śūnyatā* Dialectics

Following Dōgen's return to Japan, he composed *Fukan-zazengi*, "Principles on Zen Meditation," and *Bendōwa,* "A Talk About Pursuing the Truth." Both writings signify the religio-philosophical project of the *Shōbōgenzō*, "The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye" as well as the religious flavor of the *Sōtō* tradition. Skilled in both Chinese and Japanese literary arts, and well-learned in *Mahāyāna* philosophical thought, Dōgen's writings in this "treasury" provide a gateway for "realizing" the Buddha-dharma on both theoretical and existential levels.

What do we mean when we say realize the Buddha-dharma? In his book *Religion and Nothingness*, Keiji Nishitani begins his examination of nihilism and *śūnyatā* with a good treatment of this term. He contends that when we truly realize something, we do not only understand such on a theoretical level framed out by concepts, rationality and logic, but we also make such a thing real within us.

> By the "self-awareness of reality" I mean both our becoming aware of reality and, at the same time, the reality realizing itself in our awareness. The English word "realize," with its twofold meaning of to "actualize" and "understand," is particularly well suited to what I have in mind here, although I am told that its sense of "understand" does not necessarily connote the sense of reality coming into actualization in us. Be that as it may, I am using the word to indicate that our ability to perceive reality means that reality realizes (actualizes) itself in us; that this turn is the only way that we can realize (appropriate through understanding) the fact that reality is so realizing itself in us; and that in so doing the self-realization of reality itself takes place. (Nishitani, 5)

I will be appropriating this definition into my treatment of Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*, particularly when we examine *shinjin datsuraku* and Dōgen's philosophy of awareness. Many chapters in the *Shōbōgenzō*, such as *Genjō Kōan*, "The Realized Universe," and

Daigo, "Great Realization," are colored with the idea that realization incorporates both a existential component and a rational one as well.

The objective of this chapter is two-fold. First, by examining some of the hermeneutical issues that are involved in understanding the *Shōbōgenzō* and its historical and cultural context, we shall gain insight into Dōgen's position as a scholar/monk within the greater history of Buddhism. Following these considerations we will then move into an examination of Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā*. This examination will be conducted in light of Buddhist dialectics, particularly within the *Mahāyāna* tradition beginning with *Prajñā-pāramitā* and Nāgārjūna. The importance of this examination will not only help reveal the philosophical roots of Dōgen's Zen, but will also help us understand the skillful manner by which Dōgen examines key philosophical issues such as mind/body problem and time.. In the end, the importance of this examination will be revealed when we query the philosophical meaning of *shinjin datsuraku*.

§1 *Some Hermeneutical Considerations*

How shall we go about reading Dōgen? First, it is important to remind ourselves of the historical era in which Dōgen was writing and the audience to which he attempting to reach. The Kamakura period was a time of great social turmoil due to civil strife, natural disasters and famine. Suffering was no mystery to the Japanese during this time, and the everyday reality of "impermanence" evoked deep sentiments of vulnerability. Resulting from these states of affairs, Japan experienced the emergence of new Buddhist schools: Pure Land, *Nichiren*, and *Zen* Buddhism. These schools sought to provide a means by which the lay majority, who were the ones hit hardest by such distress, could

shoulder their suffering. This marked a shift in religious thinking among many Japanese where up until this time period Buddhism was mainly affiliated with the aristocratic few (Tamura, 2000).

In addition to the historical context, it is important to remind ourselves that Dōgen was raised among the aristocracy. At a young age, Dōgen was schooled in the literary arts, particularly Chinese and Japanese poetry. Owing to his education, most of the ideas and issues examined in the *Shōbōgenzō* are expressed through poetic and popular literary allusions and metaphors whose imagery captures the philosophical insights of Buddhist, Confucian and Taoist traditions. In the case of Buddhism, as we read through the *Shōbōgenzō*, we shall see how Dōgen synthetically constructs his position on Zen, *shinjin datsuraku* in particular, from the momentary/atomic ideas of *Abhidharma*, *śūnyatā* logic of *Mādhyamaka*, *Yogācāra* epistemology and the *Kegon* (Ch. *Hua-yen*) philosophy of mutual interpenetration. In the case of Confucianism, we shall learn how Dōgen's guidelines for monastic training, which is centered around zazen-only, is modeled after the Confucian ideal of ritual and self-cultivation. And in the case of Taoism, we shall see how much of the imagery which is used to poetically convey the philosophical ideas in Buddhism, as well as its own philosophy of yin and yang and the elemental constitution of things (i.e. earth, water, wind, fire, and metal), is borrowed from many Taoist texts including the *Tao Te Ching* and the *Chuang Tzu*. Woven through all of these philosophical traditions is a dialectical thread of logic whereby the identity of all things is "realized" through the relationship of opposites.

§2 *Śūnyatā Dialectics*

Despite the importance that dialectical logic has retained as a subject matter within Buddhist thought, it is only recently that scholars have considered dialectical logic as a conceptual window for viewing and interpreting Dōgen's writings. For example, in her book *Impermanence Is Buddha-nature*, Stambaugh states:

> Dōgen does not emphasize his use of dialectic, but it is very much present in the background. Its general formulation, which goes back to the Diamond Sutra, runs as follows: A is ~A therefore A is (thoroughly and really) A. (Stambaugh, 86)

Though Stambaugh is on track in her efforts of exploring dialectical logic as conceptual window for understanding Dōgen, I disagree with the manner by which she frames her characterization. Indeed, she is accurate in stating that Dōgen's dialectic is an extension to the one found in the *Diamond Sutra*. However, I contend that she does not go far enough in explaining how this dialectic works. Her interpretation that Dōgen does not emphasize his dialectic, but rather allows it to reside in the background of his philosophical meditations, underestimates him as a thinker. Though he does not come out directly and state, "This is my dialectic: A is ~A therefore A," throughout the *Shōbōgenzō* there are numerous examples where this dialectic is used to frame his philosophical meditations on time, being, causality, language, mind and body. As we proceed further into the study, we shall see how this is so.

There are also some hermeneutical problems with Stambaugh's analysis. In her book, she devotes a great deal of attention towards comparing and interpreting Dōgen's dialectic with that of Hegel, as well as other key figures in western philosophical traditions. Though an examination of this sort merits recognition in comparative philosophy, it does not explain how Dōgen's dialectic works in respect to the dialectical

tradition that distinctly characterizes *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and East Asian philosophical thought as whole. Such an understanding, I contend and thus seek to demonstrate in this thesis, is requisite for understanding the role dialectical logic plays in Dōgen's philosophical project.

What is Buddhist dialectics, and what role does it occupy in Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*? In Buddhism, particularly *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, dialectics was the logical method of choice for extending the Buddha's teaching of no-self to the point where all phenomenal things and cognitive ideas were understood to be empty (Skt. *śūnya*) of an independent self essence. Of the traditions that incorporated this system of logic into their religio-philosophical agendas (*Mādhayamaka, Hua-yen, T'ien-t'ai*, *Jōdo Shinshū* and *Zen*), though there are differences in the manner by which these traditions formulate their dialectic, the general consensus is the same: if we are thoroughgoing in our analysis of both phenomenal things and cognitive ideas, our understanding of such will result in a set of contradictions whereby two opposing positions and/or ideas are said to be identical.[6] For example, in the *Mādhayamaka* tradition, we are presented with the dialectic of *samsāra* is itself *nirvāna*. In *Hua-yen* and *T'ien-t'ai*, we are presented with the dialectic of the Jewel Net whereby each individual being contains the infinite multitude of beings. In Pure Land, we find the soteriological dialectic of: if a good person can enter the pure land, how much more so can an evil man? And in *Ch'an* and *Zen* we have the dialectic taken from the *Heart Sūtra*: form itself is emptiness, emptiness itself is form.[7]

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[6] It is from this understanding that dialectical logic in Buddhism has also been identified under the heading "identity of opposites logic," or "coincidence of opposites logic." See Heisig 2001.

[7] Since a comparative analysis of each of these dialectical positions would distract from the goal of this thesis, I will refrain from venturing down such a hermeneutical path. However, it ought to be noted that a comparative study of this sort is well overdue.

The philosophical well spring from which these dialectical traditions flow is the *Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtras* (Perfection of Wisdom). Encompassing both the *Heart Sūtra* and the *Diamond Sutra*, *Prajñā-pāramitā* philosophy was formulated in response to substance and non-substance based ontological views, mainly essentialism and nihilism. Beginning with the former, essentialism argues that all phenomenal things and cognitive ideas are predicated on an individual self-essence whose existence is permanent. Thinkers, who support this ontology, such as the *Abhidharma* scholars, argue that our knowledge of "things" and "subject matters" is framed in light of a set of dualisms between yours and mine, subject and object, birth and death, enlightenment and delusion, *samsāra* and *nirvāna*. An epistemology of this sort is conceptually framed under the governing law of contradiction, which states that nothing can be both affirmed and denied at the same time.

Corollary to this standpoint, the views of the latter (i.e. non-substance-based ontology/nihilism) are predicated on the belief that all phenomenal things and cognitive ideas are without an independent self-nature. Thinkers who support such a view argue that all things and/or existence in its entirety is really nothing at all, and thus without an ontological "ground" to stand upon. At the time of extinction, the life force of each thing becomes swallowed up by an abysmal void which leaves no traces of inherency, no traces of Being, no traces of meaning, and no traces of purpose. Extending this non-substance-based ontology to an epistemological domain, what constitutes right knowing becomes relative to one's own existential agenda.

It is important to note that all too often Buddhism is accused of affirming a position of nihilism due to its philosophy of selflessness. Strictly from a logical

perspective, such accusations are unsound. For example, while nihilism denies that anything exists, it unavoidably creates a higher level duality between the views of essentialism and itself. And, because views that assume duality also assume *svabhāva*, nihilism is never able to take its philosophy of nothingness beyond the perimeter of Being and/or Existence. Its philosophy of non-Existence, in other words, is itself another type of Existence. In the end, nihilism contradicts itself. As we proceed, we shall see that the Buddhist teaching of no-self and its *Mahāyāna* interpretations do not fall into the same contradiction, but rather provides a Middle Way between these two metaphysical extremes, mainly essentialism and nihilism. It is important to note, however, that this Middle Way is not a midway point itself, but rather a skillful way of stating that no two extremes exist independently. They are instead dependent, and because they are dependent, we cannot, ultimately, think of them as two.

The Buddhist philosophy of no-self argues that all things lack a permanent, unchanging quality that can provide a basis for personal identity. For example, consider a passage from *The Questions of King Milinda*, where the venerable *Nagasena* conveys to King *Milinda* that all things, such as a chariot, are devoid of a self-nature.

> 'Then if you came, Sire, in a carriage, explain to me what that is. Is it the pole that is the chariot?'
> 'I did not say that.'
> 'Is it the axle that is the chariot?'
> 'Certainly not.'
> 'Is it the wheels, or the framework, or the ropes, or the yoke, or the spokes of the wheels, or the goad, that are the chariot?'
> And to all these he still answered no.
> 'Then is it all these parts of it that are the chariot?'
> 'No Sir.'
> 'But is there anything outside that is the chariot?'
> And he still answered no.
> 'Then thus, ask as I may, I can discover no chariot. Chariot is a mere empty sound. (Davids, 115)

The conclusion to be drawn from this passage is that rather than possessing an inherent self essence, what we take to be self-natures or universal natures, such as "chariots," are conceptually constructed names, which are without inherency. The ontological status of each individual thing is in someway dependent upon the structural components which constitute both material things, such as a chariot, and cognitive ideas framed out in language. However, instead of taking the same epistemological trajectory as early Buddhism, particularly that of the *Abhidharma* scholars whereby the conditioning elements and/or *dharmas* that make up this codependent matrix of existence were classified into categorical charts,[8] *Mahāyāna* thinkers, including Nāgārjuna and his *Prajñā-pāramitā* philosophy, extended this *anātman* philosophy to a position of *śūnyatā* where all *dharmas* (i.e. atomic units that are thought to be indivisible) are understood to be empty of individual self-nature.

§3 Nāgārjunian Influences

One of the most cited examples of *śūnyatā* dialectics is found in the *Heart Sūtra*[9] where *Avolakiteśvara* (The Bodhisattva of Compassion) states:

> Here O Śāriputra, form itself is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, form does not differ from emptiness; whatever is form, that is emptiness, whatever is emptiness, that is form, the same is true for feelings, perceptions, impulses and consciousness. (Conze, 86)

This no-*svabhāva* dialectic, in which the duality of emptiness and form are unified into one identity, which is itself no-identity, was appropriated and further systematized by Nāgārjuna, founder of the *Mādhyamaka* school, into what is known as the Middle Way of

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[8] See Chapter One of the *Abidharmakośa*.

[9] It is worth noting that Chapter Two of the *Shōbōgenzō* is devoted specifically to the *Heart Sūtra*.

neither Being nor non-Being. Nāgārjuna used this dialectic to conceptually frame his examination of an array of philosophical issues. In his most notable treatises, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Fundamentals of the Middle Way), his philosophical inquiries cover topics such as causality, origin, cessation, motion, sensory perception, physical objects and their properties, desire, suffering, time, language and the possibility of error. For example, in the case of causality he argues that:

> Neither from itself nor from another
> Nor from both
> Nor from without a cause
> Does anything whatever, anywhere arise. (Garfield, 3)

The style of argument presented here is known as the 'four-limbed' refutation (Skt. *catuskoti*), otherwise called the tetralemma. This *via negativa* technique (Skt. *prasanga*) proposes that all metaphysical views are committed to one of the four positions: being, non-being, both being and non-being or neither being nor non-being. There is no fifth position. By posing a series of questions to his opponent's philosophical position, the tetralemma reveals the logical inconsistencies in their positions without positing a metaphysical alternative. To get clear on his dialectic, and how it works, we shall examine each lemma in the above verse in closer detail.

In the first three lemmas of this verse, Nāgārjuna considers causality from the standpoint of the essentialist, a view which assumes that within every causal event either the cause, the effect, or both are ontologically grounded by a self-nature. For Nāgārjuna, if we assume that causes and effects have a self-nature, then there are only three possible relationships by which the cause and effect can relate: sameness, difference, or both sameness and difference. However, as we shall see, each of these alternatives entails inherent contradictions. For example, consider the alternative of sameness. If the effect

were the same as the cause, and given that the identity of something being a cause and another thing being an effect implies two different things, we would have to argue that the effect is somehow potentially existent in the cause (e.g. the sprout is potentially existent in the seed, or, the curds are potentially existent in the milk). However, this is problematic, for we would have to explain how the potential existence of the sprout relates to the actual existence of the sprout (i.e. effect) which no longer potentially exists within the seed (i.e. its cause). When this view[10] is taken to its logical end, such explanations fall into an infinite regress of having to account for the sameness, difference or both sameness and difference of potential and actual existence.

In the case of difference, if the cause (A) and the effect (B) of a causal event were different, and A is the cause of B's existence, then B would be non-existent prior to A causing it to happen. When this position is examined thoroughly, we are forced to explain how it is possible for A to cause something that is non-existent, such as B, to come into existence? How can something come from nothing? One possible answer to this problem is that there is some kind of causal condition (C) which can help bring about the existence of B. Such an argument would allow the essentialist to account for the causal relationship between A and B without compromising their inherent differences. However, if this were the case, we would then have to account for the relationship between A and C, as well as C and B.[11] In the end, such clarification will only fall into an infinite regress where the ontological status of each conditioning link would have to be explained through an additional conditioning link.

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[10] Garfield notes that the view under consideration here is that of the Samkhya philosophers. In short, Samkhya thinkers argued that all causation is actually self causation.

[11] In short, are A and C same or different? Are B and C same or different?

Finally, in the case of both sameness and difference, Nāgārjuna argues that it is logically impossible within our own conventions of speech for something to be both same (i.e. cause is the same as the effect) and different (i.e. cause is different from that of the effect) at the same time.[12] Sameness and difference are mutually exclusive not mutually entailing.

After refuting the essentialist standpoint, Nāgārjuna then argues that things cannot arise from a non-cause. Implicit within this lemma is idea that causation is a necessary condition of our everyday experiences within the world. Such experiences are filled with numerous examples of causal relations and causal patterns. When I make a fire in the hearth, heat and smoke arise. Or, when I plant and water a seed, a sprout germinates. There are no experiences that are not causally contingent, and, there are no objects of experience that can be said to be causally unrelated to other things. Herein, Nāgārjuna marshals his arguments against the other metaphysical extreme, nihilism, an extreme which argues that nothing exists. He states that if existing things originated without a cause, then our account of things would be random and absurd. Under such conditions, smoke would have the potential of arising from non-burning firewood, and sprouts would have the potential of arising from things like stones. In short, there is nothing within our ordinary modes of experience that demonstrates to us that things originate from a non-cause.[13]

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[12] This both/and refutation in the third lemma skillfully functions as a argumentative technique in Indian scholastic debate. To demonstrate that the opponent's views were self-contradictory, would indeed give one the upper hand in heated debates over such subject matters.

[13] Kasulis also begins his examination of Zen with a treatment of Nāgārjuna's position on causality and time in his book *Zen Action, Zen Person*. While his treatment provides an historical background to the Zen tradition, I am planning to show how Dōgen's style of thinking, though masked over in poetry, is quite similar to that of Nāgārjuna.

As we noted earlier, though this causal position seems to have a nihilistic flavor, it is not the case that Nāgārjuna is dismissing the idea of causality as a whole. As is stated in his fourth lemma, the existence of things must be preceded by a cause. Contrary to the views of essentialism and nihilism, Nāgārjuna argues that the identity of things being labeled as causes and effects are only conventional identities that are intended to pragmatically serve the efficiency of language. Beyond this efficiency there are no essential causes and effects that exist in-and-of-themselves., Instead, all things are dependently conditioned, and because they are dependently conditioned, they are empty.

This Middle Way dialectic comes to its epistemological climax in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, where Nāgārjuna demonstrates that *śūnyatā* is itself not a position and/or *abstractum* that can be affirmed as a thing.

> Whether in causes (*hetu*), in the conditions (*pratyaya*), in the combination of the causes and the conditions (*hetupratyayasāmagrī*), or in a different thing, nowhere does exist an intrinsic nature of the things, whatever they maybe. On this ground it is said that all things are void (*śūyāh sarvabhāvāh*). For instance the sprout is neither in the seed, its cause, nor in the things known as its conditions, viz., earth, water, fire, wind, etc., taken one by one, nor in the totality of the conditions (*hetupratyayavinirmuktah*) Since there is nowhere an intrinsic nature, the sprout is devoid of an intrinsic nature (*nihsvabhāva*). Being devoid of an intrinsic nature, it is void (*śūnya*). And just as this sprout is devoid of an intrinsic nature, so also are all the things void because of being devoid of an intrinsic nature. (Bhattacharya, 95)

Instead, as Garfield notes, *śūnyatā* is dependently conditioned by its relationship with things. When we speak of emptiness, we speak of the emptiness of things or ideas. How can we speak of emptiness independently from things or ideas?

> Suppose that we take a conventional entity, such as a table. We analyze it to demonstrate its emptiness, finding that there is no table apart from its parts, that it cannot be distinguished in a principled way from its antecedent and subsequent histories, and so forth. So we conclude that it is empty. But now let us analyze that emptiness – the emptiness of the table – to see what we find. What do we find? Nothing at all but the table's lack of inherent existence.

> The emptiness is dependent upon the table. No conventional table – no emptiness of the table. To see the table as empty, for Nāgārjuna, is not to somehow see "beyond" the illusion of the table to some other, more real entity. It is to see the table as conventional, as dependent. But the table that we so see when we see its emptiness is the very same table, seen not as the substantial thing we instinctively posit, but rather as it is. (Garfield, 38)

Thus, *śūnyatā* is itself *śūnya*.

According to Nāgārjuna, our insights into the emptiness of phenomena and emptiness itself can be summed up in a two-fold system of truth: conventional truth (Skt. *samvrti-satya*) and ultimate truth (Skt. *paramārtha-satya*). Unlike other philosophical schools both in the east and in the west who posit a two fold system of truth (e.g. *samsāra* and *nirvāna*, the world of particulars and the world of universal forms, phenomenal and noumenal realities) Nāgārjuna argues that these two truths – conventional and ultimate – are dependent, and because they are dependent they are empty.

> The Buddha's teaching of the Dharma
> Is based on two truths:
> A truth of worldly convention
> And an ultimate truth.
>
> Those who do not understand
> The distinction drawn between these two truths
> Do not understand
> The Buddha's profound truth.
>
> Without foundation in the conventional truth,
> The significance of the ultimate cannot be taught.
> Without understanding the significance of the ultimate,
> Liberation is not achieved. (Garfield, 68)

The logic of this two truth system is such that though the conventional existence of things including tables and chairs are ultimately empty of an inherent table-ness or chair-ness nature (i.e., they lack *svabhāva),* this ultimate status of emptiness, is itself dependent upon there being conventional things like tables and chairs. Due to such dependency,

both the ultimate (i.e. emptiness) and the conventional (i.e. tables and chairs etc.) truths are empty of inherent nature.

§4 *Dōgen's Dialectical Standpoint on Śūnyatā*

Nāgārjuna's Middle Way dialectic provides a good conceptual bridge for examining Dōgen. Throughout the *Shōbōgenzō*, there are many passages that indicate that Nāgārjuna's thought played a key role in shaping Dōgen's philosophy. In some passages, he expresses gratitude to Nāgārjuna for having clarified the Middle Way standpoint on *śūnyatā* and subject matters such as causality. For example, in his essay *Shinjin-Inga*, "Deep Belief in Cause and Effect," he states, "We should profoundly believe in and admire, and should humbly receive upon the head the benevolent instruction of the ancestral Master Nāgārjuna" (Nishijima, 191). In other passages, he appropriates Nāgārjuna's tetralemma formula as a blue print for his own verses. In *Juki*, "Affirmation," he states that:

> There are many kinds of affirmation, but if I now briefly summarize them, there are eight kinds as follows:
> 1. the subject knows, others do not know;
> 2. everybody else knows, the subject does not know;
> 3. both the subject and everybody else knows;
> 4. neither the subject nor everybody knows;
> 5. the near realize it, the far do not realize it;
> 6. the far realize it, the near do not realize it;
> 7. both [the near and the far] realize it;
> 8. neither [the near nor the far] realize it. (Nishijima, 199)

However, notwithstanding these influences, what distinguishes Dōgen from Nāgārjuna is the manner by which he presents his standpoint on the two truths. For example, as we noted in our examination of Nāgārjuna's position on causality, causes and effects conventionally exist through language, yet on an ultimate level they are non-existent.

While an essentialist reading of these two truths would argue for the inherent differences between the conventional and the ultimate, Nāgārjuna contends that they are dependent, and thus lacking inherent nature or inherent differences. This contention seems to imply a third truth, mainly the identity of conventional and ultimate truth.[14] Rather than using the two truth system that is woven throughout much of Nāgārjuna's writings, Dōgen appropriates this three truth model as the architectural frame for his dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā*. The reason for this difference between Dōgen and Nāgārjuna is, I contend, due to Dōgen's soteriological concerns, mainly the impermanence of everyday life. We will be returning to this point again in Chapter Five. To get clear on how his dialectical standpoint works, we shall focus our attention to *Genjō Kōan*, "The Realized Universe."

There are several reasons why I have chosen this essay for examining Dōgen's dialectical standpoint. The subject matters dealt with in *Genjō Kōan* reflect much, if not all, of the remaining chapters in the *Shōbōgenzō*. Francis Cook argues this point in his introduction of "Sounds of Valley Streams: Enlightenment in Dōgen's Zen."

> Dōgen himself seems to have been fully aware that with it he had conveyed something important. When he began to arrange his talks to the monks (and lay persons) in what was probably to be a collection of a hundred of these essays, he placed "Genjō Kōan" first in the collection, in a position of prominence suggesting that the essay is somewhat of a credo or manifesto of religious understanding. Later commentators and readers see the essay, on the one hand, as a statement of personal and religious understanding that transmits the author's "skin, flesh, bones, and marrow" and, on the other hand, as announcing the central themes that would become the substance of other essays. In this way, the nearly one hundred essays of *Shōbōgenzō* can be seen as so many facets of "*Genjō Kōan*," exploring and developing its themes. (Cook, 46)

The subject matters and themes within this essay consist of the nature of enlightenment and delusion, birth and death, self and others, practice and attainment, realization, time

[14] The three truth model is integrated throughout the ideas of East Asian Buddhist schools, particularly *Tendai* and *Kegon*. See Swanson.

mind and body. The title of the essay, *Genjō Kōan,* is compounded by the two characters *genjō*, meaning "to realize," and *kōan*, which is an abbreviation of *kofu-no-antoku*, meaning "public case, law or ruling." Some translators such as Cook and Nishijima extend their translations of *kōan* in Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* to mean "Universe" or "Absolute Reality."[15] Throughout the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen uses the term "*Genjō Kōan*" soteriologically in order to illustrate the point that in Zen practice, one must both "understand" and "make real" the Buddha's truth in a non-dualistic manner. Though he does not explicitly state what this universal principle is, for to do so would subvert the pedagogical style of Zen and East Asian Buddhism as a whole,[16] we shall discover that this universal principle is Buddha-nature, and that realization of such is contingent upon dropping off of body and mind.

Dōgen opens up this essay with a poetic verse:

> When all *dharmas* are [seen as] the Buddha-Dharma, then there is delusion and realization, there is practice, there is life and there is death, there are buddhas and there are ordinary beings. When the myriad of *dharmas* are each not of the self, there is no delusion and no realization, no buddhas and no ordinary beings, no life and no death. The Buddha's truth is originally transcendent over abundance and scarcity, and so there is life and death, there is delusion and realization, there are beings and buddhas. And though it is like this, it is only that flowers, while loved, fall; and weeds while hated, flourish. (Nishijima, I 33)

In this verse, the relationship between the first three lines is dialectically framed in a similar way to some key passages in the *Diamond Sūtra*. For example in the *Diamond Sūtra* it reads:

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[15] Perhaps this philological extension is meant to capture the soteriological ideas in Dōgen's Zen.

[16] In East Asian Buddhism, particularly Zen, to explain something in full detail is to spoil what is meant to be conveyed. Thus, the pedagogical style in Zen monasteries is an extension of the Confucian ideal of the *Chun tzu*, "gentleman." If one was a gentleman, one could, if shown only two steps in an explanation, immediately know ten. "The Master said to Tzu-kung, 'Who is the better man, you or Hui?' 'How dare I compare myself with Hui? When he is told one thing he understands ten. When I am told one thing I understand only two.'" See Book V:9, from *The Analects*. tr.D.C. Lau. London: Penguin Books, 1979.

> The Lord said: When, Subhuti, you consider the number of particles of dust in this world system of 1,000 million worlds – would they be many? Subhuti replied: Yes, O Lord. Because what was taught as particles of dust by the Tathāgata, as no particles of dust was taught by the Tathāgata. Therefore they are called "particles of dust." And this world system the Tathāgata has taught as no-system. Therefore it is called a "world system." (Conze 50)

Now, unlike the dialectical style of the *Heart Sūtra*, the *Diamond Sūtra* employs a dialectic that negates its first-order negation of A is ~A with an affirmation of A is A. It is important to note that this second-order negation via affirmation is not polemically geared towards undercutting the *Heart Sūtra* dialectic of A is ~A, form itself is emptiness/emptiness itself is form. Instead, while the *Heart Sūtra* is conceptually fastened to provide an ontological account of existence whereby existence itself, along with all existing beings are found to be empty of an independent self-nature, the *Diamond Sūtra* is geared towards setting up Middle Way epistemology, which is no-epistemology at all (i.e. *adristi,* "no view"), between views of Being and non-Being. To examine how this dialectic of negation of negation through affirmation works, we shall closely examine this opening passage systematically.

The first-order negation of A is ~ A underlies the relationship between the first two lines. In the first line, "When all dharmas are [seen as] the Buddha-Dharma, then there is delusion and realization, there is practice, there is life and there is death, there are buddhas and there are ordinary beings" (Nishijima, 33), Dōgen presents a dualistic/essentialist view of the Buddha- Dharma, a view which distinguishes inherent differences between Buddhas and ordinary beings, delusion and enlightenment, life and death. As we noted earlier, implicit within this view rests the assumption that all phenomenal things and cognitive ideas are constituted by an inherent self-essence, an essence which isolates each thing and or idea a part from all other things and ideas.

This dualistic view is then negated in the second line, "When the myriad dharmas are each not of the self, there is no delusion and no realization, no buddhas and no ordinary beings, no life and no death" (Nishijima, 33), where Dōgen considers the non-dual alternative of these essentialistic assumptions, namely the Buddhist position of *ānatman* and *śūnyatā*. Given the fact that all things are dependently conditioned by all other phenomenal things, all things are empty of a self or an inherent self-nature. When this ontological standpoint is extended to an epistemological arena, any and all distinctions between conceptual constructions (Skt. *kalpana*) are founded as conventional, and without an ultimate nature. Such constructs which manifest both in language and in thought do not correspond to some universal idea or *abstractum*. They are empty, and because they are empty we cannot make any ultimate distinctions between buddhas and ordinary beings, delusion and enlightenment, birth and death.

Following these two lines, in line three, "The Buddha's truth is originally transcendent over abundance and scarcity, and so there is life and death, there is delusion and realization, there are beings and buddhas" (Nishijima, 33), Dōgen negates his first-order negation with a second-order negation via affirmation. We must not think of this second-order negation as a rejection of the A is ~A logic itself. Instead, we should think of this second-order negation as necessary step for "understanding" *śūnyatā*. If we follow the no-*svabhāva* assumptions presented in the second line, these assumptions and/or convictions will force us to contradict the non-dual position we are trying to assert by creating a higher level duality between the dualistic views of essentialism and the non-dualistic views of *śūnyatā*. As a result, *śūnyatā* becomes an "idea," a meta-physical *abstractum*, whose identity eventually compromises the entire Buddhist project of

selflessness. To avoid this trap, in line three Dōgen re-asserts the original set of dualistic distinctions between life and death, delusion and realization, buddhas and ordinary beings. This reassertion of duality is not a reaffirmation of essentialism, but is rather a non-dualistic affirmation between duality and non-duality. If we recall from our earlier treatment of Nāgārjūna's Middle Way standpoint on *śūnyatā śūnyatā*, we noted that emptiness must always appear as form in order to remain truly empty. If emptiness were to appear as an independent reality set apart from the world of form, emptiness would no longer be truly empty but rather just another metaphysical reality simply because of its independent status. This same logic also applies to non-duality, for in order to "truly" remain non-dual, non-duality must always appear as duality otherwise it ends up affirming a higher level duality between duality and non-duality. Thus, Dōgen contends that because all things are non-dual and fundamentally empty, there is duality between birth and death, delusion and realization, buddhas and ordinary beings.

Following this dialectical progression, Dōgen condenses the philosophical import within these three lines into poetic verse: "And though it is like this, it is only that flowers, when loved, fall; and weeds while hated, flourish" (Nishijima, 33). In this verse, Dōgen attunes us to the sotereological concerns which rest at the centre of *Mahāyāna* thought in general, and Zen in particular: the world, and our being-in-the-world which are colored by dualities, is impermanent. To clarify the meaning of this verse, and what these soteriological concerns entail for Buddhist practitioners, both monastic and lay, we must proceed with an examination of Dōgen's standpoint of body and mind and the dialectic of *shinjin datsuraku*.

Chapter Three: A Dialectical Reading of Mind, Body and Time

The mind/body problem is a dominant theme throughout many chapters in the *Shōbōgenzō*. Throughout the history of Buddhist thought, the mind/body problem was examined in light of the following questions: does the mind possess an individual self-nature which continues to exist from one life to the next, or, is the mind dependent upon the material body whereupon the death of the body, the mind too is extinguished? Is the phenomenal world, consisting of mountains, rivers and trees real, or, is it an illusion, like "flowers flowering in the sky"[17] whose only existence is that of mental construct? In what manner does the mind relate to the phenomenal world and how do such relations condition one's views of authentic modes of being? In essays such as, "*Genjō Kōan*" (The Realized Universe), "*Shin-Fukatoku*" (Mind Cannot Be Grasped), "*Shinjin-Gakudo*" (Learning the Truth With Body and Mind) and "*Gabyo*" (A Picture of a Rice Cake) Dōgen extends such questioning with the contention that a thorough understanding and experience of body-mind is pivotal for realizing the Buddha-Dharma. For example, in *"Shinjin-Gakudo"* he states: "Provisionally, there are two ways to learn the Buddha's truth: to learn it with mind, and to learn it with the body" (Nishijima, 247).

In this chapter, we shall query the mind/body problem as it is presented in the *Shōbōgenzō*. Through his dialectical lens, we shall see that Dōgen does not try to make an ontological distinction between mind and body; rather, his efforts are to: 1) undercut any ultimate distinction between the mind and body; 2) and to provide his own

[17] Dōgen uses this expression in his essay *Kūge* (Flowers in Space).

philosophy on how to live in an authentic relationship with the world in its true nature, a relationship that is not divorced from ordinary modes of being.[18]

In addition, we shall also discover that his examination of body and mind is framed in light of his views of time. Hee Jin Kim notes that the uniqueness of Dōgen's philosophy is how he ties each philosophical matter together with his reflections on time and impermanence.

> As we turn to Dōgen's view of time, we must at the outset, note the fact that although the problem of time was an integral part of Buddhist thought, it had never been treated as central, but instead subordinated to such cosmological and ontological issues as non-substantiality, causation, emptiness, the Buddha-nature, etc. Perhaps the unique significance of Dōgen in this regard consists in his attribution of central importance to this problem. Dōgen picks the problem from its obscurity and places it in relief in the total context of his thought. (Kim, 190)

As we proceed we shall see how Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā* is used to deconstruct the essentialism of body and mind, and, how that style is carried into his reflections on time. The two subject matters are, in other words, interrelated. In order to have a clear understanding of mind and body, one must have a clear understanding of time, and, in order to have a clear understanding of time, one must have a clear understanding of mind and body. This contention should not be mistaken for question begging or circularity; rather, it is a dialectical model of balancing/equalizing opposites of both affirmative and negative positions. Moreover, I contend that it is this dialectical model allows Dōgen to free his philosophical meditations from the essentialistic traces of assuming a teleological view. Whenever an argumentative position asserts a unidirectional thesis, such a thesis inadvertently assumes both a first principle as a foundation for thinking, and discriminates the ends of the thesis (i.e. conclusion) from

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[18] The first point makes Dōgen look like a *Mādhayamaka*. The second, however, seems to demonstrate his East Asian commitments to yin and yang schools of thought, in particular, Confucianism and Taoism.

that of the means (i.e. logic and arguments). I plan to demonstrate that Dōgen rejects both of these assumptions. Ultimately, the significance of these investigations will help open up a conceptual window for considering *shinjin datsuraku*, particularly from a dialectical perspective.

§1 *Reflections from a Drifting Boats and Meditations on Firewood and Ash*

To begin our examination of Dōgen's standpoint on mind and body, let us consider a passage from *Genjō Kōan*.

> When people first seek the Dharma, we are far removed from the borders of Dharma. But as soon as the Dharma is authentically transmitted to us, we are a human being in our original element. When a man is sailing along in a boat and he moves his eyes to the shore, he misapprehends that the shore is moving. If he keeps his eyes fixed on the boat, he knows that it is the boat which is moving forward. Similarly, when we try to understand the myriad dharmas on the basis of confused assumptions about body and mind, we misapprehend that our own mind or our own essence may be permanent. If we become familiar with action and come back to this concrete place, the truth is evident that the myriad dharmas are self. Firewood becomes ash; it can never go back to being firewood. Nevertheless we should not take the view that ash is its future and firewood is its past. Remember, firewood abides in the place of firewood in the dharma. It has past and it has future. Although it has past and future, the past and future are cut off. Ash exists in the place of ash in the Dharma. It has past and it has future. The firewood after becoming ash, does not again become firewood. Similarly, human beings, after death, do not live again. At the same time, it is an established custom in the Buddha-Dharma not to say that life turns into death. (Nishijima, 34)

We are presented here with two analogical examples which are geared towards deconstructing essentialistic views of mind and body. The first, the analogy of viewing the shore from a boat, addresses the everyday conventional assumption, and apparent reality, that the phenomenal world of change, temporality and impermanence is experienced by an unchanging, permanent subject of experience. This conventional view of mind/subjectivity argues that our experience in the world must be contingent upon

some permanent self essence (i.e. mind) for if it were not, our ability to account for change in the phenomenal world from one moment in time to the next would be impossible. In other words, the essentialist argues, there must be some inherent subjectivity (i.e. inherent mind essence) that remains constant from one moment to the next in order for any account of change or impermanence to be established.

For Dōgen, however, these assumptions are illusory, and the arguments that support them have no purchase. If we state that the phenomenal world of change is experienced by an inherently existing subject or mind-essence, then we have to explain how such a subject, whose ontological nature is believed to be permanent, could possibly interact and relate with the phenomenal world whose ontological nature is impermanent? As we saw in Nāgārjuna's critique of causality, all explanations will lead to an infinite regress of trying to bridge the ontological divide between two different things. In the end, such a regress, as we noted earlier in section two, will be unable to coherently ground such a view.

For Dōgen, as is the case for Nāgārjuna, our everyday experience in the world of changing, momentary phenomena and events is only possible because the subject (i.e. mind) is empty of inherency. Dōgen's analogy highlights this point when he says that when we focus our attention away from the myriad phenomena in the world and direct it toward ourselves, we shall discover that we are constantly changing from one moment to the next. There is nothing within the sphere of our conscious lives that is static, constant or independent. We too, like the world of phenomena are impermanent, and, because we are impermanent we are unable to locate a boundary between an ultimately existing subject and an ultimately existing phenomenal world which exists as the subject's object.

For Dōgen, "boundaries between self and world fall away; you are in the world and the world is in you" (Blocker, 55). We shall be returning to this point in the next chapter when we examine Dōgen's philosophy of *shinjin datsuraku.*

In the second example of firewood becoming ash, Dōgen addresses more specifically the essentialistic assumptions that ground positions of materialism. His technique for doing so is framed in light of the Buddhist law of karma which literally means action, "If we become familiar with action and come back to this concrete place, the truth is evident that the myriad dharmas are self" (Nishijima, 34). Here, Dōgen considers two metaphysical explanations that could possibly ground a position of materialism. On the one hand, the materialist could argue that it is things in the world, such as firewood and ash, that have individual self essences. On the other, rather than things having inherent essences, the reality of change and impermanence has an inherent nature. Thus, the only thing that is unchanging is change itself, the only thing that is permanent is impermanence itself.

Dōgen challenges these assumptions by first acknowledging the conventional view of cause and effect when he states, "Firewood becomes ash; it can never go back to being firewood" (Nishijima, 34). This conventional designation illustrates Dōgen's rejection of metaphysical nihilism, a metaphysical extreme which, as we noted in section two, denies the existence of causal relations. However, despite this conventional view, he argues that such a view, which is dependent upon our conception of time and the threefold division between past, present and future, cannot be ultimately established. For example, in the causal event of firewood becoming ash, if firewood were conceptually designated as the past and ash as the future, we would have to explain how the past and

the future relate to each other. Is the future state of ash dependent upon the past state of firewood or not? If we state that they are dependent, then we are unable to account for any inherent differences between the past and the future and their respective phases of firewood and ash. On the other hand, if they are independent, we are unable to account for any relation between these two periods of time, and their respective material phases, without falling into an infinite regress. The underlying logic of this analogy demonstrates that there are no inherent essences that can be located, or coherently established, amongst any and all conventional phenomena. They are, "ultimately," empty.

Pivoting from this point, he then considers the other materialistic alternative: the lack of inherent existence is itself the inherent nature of all existing things. Or, in the case of impermanence, the only thing that is permanent is impermanence. The consequences of this view would lead to an essentialism of emptiness, and thus a reification of conventional and ultimate truths (i.e. the conventional designation of firewood and ash is inherently different from its ultimate nature of emptiness). Dōgen avoids these metaphysical traps when he returns to the conventional designation of things after denying their inherency when he states again, "The firewood, after becoming ash, does not again become firewood. Similarly, human beings, after death, do not live again" (Nishijima, 34). Implicit within this dialectical return to the conventional designation of things (i.e. things of the present do not return to their past phases) is the idea that the emptiness of phenomena cannot be perceived via experience or conceived via reason independently from any such phenomena. Emptiness is not some metaphysical alternative to essentialism or nihilism. It too is empty. Thus, in keeping with the *Mādhyāmaka* standpoint of *śūnyatā śūnyatā*, Dōgen does not reify the difference between

the conventional designation of phenomena and their ultimate status of being empty of an inherent essence. For Dōgen, the conventional is the ultimate and vice versa.

Dōgen closes this dialectical progression of *śunyatā śūnyatā* with the *Kegon* characterization of the universe existing as an 'instantaneous' moment, a moment where all phenomenal things (i.e. dharmas; mind/body) mutually interpenetrate each other to the point that no-boundary can be located between the arising and ceasing, birth and death of all phenomenal beings.

> This is why we speak of no-appearance. And it is the Buddha's preaching established in the turning of the Dharma wheel that death does not turn into life. This is why we speak of no-disappearance. Life is an instantaneous situation, and death is also an instantaneous situation. It is the same for example with winter and spring. We do not think that winter becomes spring, and we do not say that spring becomes summer. (Nishijima, 34)

This point is also presented in his essay *Shōji* (Life-and-Death):

> To understand that we move from birth to death is a mistake. Birth is a state at one moment; it already has a past and will have a future. For this reason, it is said in the Buddha-Dharma that appearance is just non-appearance. Extinction also is a state at one moment; it too has a past and a future. This is why it is said that disappearance is just non-disappearance. (Nishijima, 222)

The *Kegon* (Ch. *Hua-yen)* philosophy of mutual interpenetration is a later development of the early Buddhist teaching of dependent co-arising and the *Mādhayamaka* standpoint of emptiness. In general, the philosophy argues that since all things are co-dependent and thus empty of an inherent/independent self-nature, we cannot isolate individual material phenomena or mental ideas apart from all other beings that exist within the phenomenal world. Based upon this argument, we cannot, out of logical necessity, establish the existence of some other nature, for the very idea of there being an "other nature" is solely dependent on there being an individual self nature to which some "other nature" can stand in opposition. Accordingly, because we cannot establish the existence of some

inherently existing "other nature" we must not think that there is some ontological boundary which obstructs phenomenal things such as mountains and streams, trees and stones, lanterns and tiles. Instead, each phenomenal thing mutually interpenetrates to the point where each thing, because they are not things, contains all other phenomenal things.

> Nothing in this universe is an isolated event. The existence of event A depends on events B, C, and D, and vice versa. Not only do they depend upon each other, but they subsist and "contain" one another in the sense that there is an interimmanence between all things. (Chang, 123)

What is unique about Dōgen's appropriation of this philosophy, as is presented in the above passages from *Genjō Kōan* and *Shōji,* is the manner by which he frames it round the issue of time and the instantaneousness of existence. It is here that we begin to see how Dōgen yokes the subject matter of time together with his standpoint on mind and body. The two are dependent upon each other and must not be isolated as two independent arenas of thought.

§2 *Momentless Moments of Timeless Times: Dōgen's Being/Time*

Dōgen organizes his position on time as a response to the conventional everyday view which assumes that time is an independent thing or entity which somehow exists apart from all other phenomenal things.[19] For example, consider the following passages from *Uji.*

> We can never measure how long and distant or how short and pressing twelve hours is; at the same time, we call it "twelve hours." The leaving and coming of the directions and traces of time are clear, and so people do not doubt it. They do not doubt it, but that does not mean that they know it. (Nishijima, 110)

> We should not understand only that Time flies. We should not learn that "flying" is the only ability of Time. If we just left Time to fly away, some

[19] Kim provides a a good historical background the problem of time in Buddhist thought in general, and in Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō* in particular. See Kim, p. 184-191.

> gaps in it might appear. Those who fail to experience and to hear the truth of Existence-Time do so because they understand Time only as having passed. (Nishijima, 112)

This everyday view argues that time is a linear continuum moving from a distant past, through the immediate present and onto a distant future. It is within this continuum that "inherently existing things" are contained, and it is due to their having self essences that allows for us to follow their "directions and traces" such as "winter becoming spring and spring becoming summer."

> When we use such expressions as "time flows," "time flies," etc., two different situations are implied: (1) Time is a kind of entity, or a thing in itself, which moves apart from and independent of the flow of events and vicissitude of thing in the world, and (2) the things and events of the world move against the background of time. If we use the familiar analogy of a fruit in a pot, the first case is analogous to the situation in which the pot is moving but the fruit is still, and the second to the reverse situation. (Kim, 191)

Pivoting from some of the same kinds of arguments used to refute the essentialist's view of mind and body, if we were to accept this common sense view of time, and thus treat it as some ultimate view, we would have to consider the question of whether time is changing or not? If we say that it is changing, then we fall into an infinite regress of having to posit a "meta-time" in which such changes occur and progressively unfold from the past, to the present and onto the future. On the other hand, if we were to say that it is unchanging, then we would have to concede our conventional everyday observances of temporal passage, progression, such as firewood becoming ash, for the past, present and future would all coexist in the same moment. Thus, if the past, the present and future exist in the same moment, any distinction between before and after, today and yesterday, winter and spring would be impossible.[20]

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[20] This argument is used by Nāgārjuna in his reflections on time. See Garfield, 95.

Following from these considerations, which are rooted in *Mādhyāmaka* thought,[21] Dōgen argues that because time itself cannot be established as an independent thing, time cannot be thought of as something different from existence and existing things. He makes this point in his essay *Uji* (Existence/Time) when he discloses his non-dual position that existence/being is itself time, and that time is itself existence.

> An eternal Buddha says,
>
> Sometimes standing on top of the highest peak,
> Sometimes moving along the bottom of the deepest ocean.
> Sometimes three heads and eight arms,
> Sometimes the sixteen foot or eight foot golden body.
> Sometimes a staff or a whisk,
> Sometimes an outdoor pillar or stone lantern.
> Sometimes the third son of Chang or the fourth son of Lee,
> Sometimes the Earth and Space.
>
> In this word "sometimes," time is already just Existence, and all Existence is just time. (Nishijima, 110)

This non-dual standpoint is reinforced later in the same essay when he states that time is not different from phenomenal things such as mountains and seas.

> The mountains are Time, and the seas are Time. Without Time, the mountains and the seas could not exist: we should not deny that Time exists in the mountains and the seas here and now. If Time decays, the mountains and seas decay. If Time is not subject to decay, the mountains and the seas are not subject to decay. In accordance with this truth the bright star appears, the Tathāgata appears, the Eye appears, and picking up a flower appears, and this is just Time. Without Time, it would not be like this. (Nishijima, I 116)

The logic underlying this non-dual standpoint argues that if time and existence/existing things were independent from each other, then no possible relationship could be established between the two without falling into an infinite regress. What is it that links two independent things such as time and phenomena together, which in turn enables us to speak about the past moment of firewood and the future moment of ash? Because we

[21] Jay Garfield notes in his commentary to *Mūlamādhyamakakārika* that Nāgārjunā's insights into time are foundational for Dōgen's standpoint on *Uji*.

cannot find a link connecting time and existence together, the conventional/dualistic view is "ultimately" untenable.

Dōgen frames out this non-dual standpoint in light of the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* theory of momentariness.

> To grasp the pivot and express it: all that exists throughout the whole Universe is lined up in a series and at the same time is individual moments of time. Because Time is Existence-Time, it is my existence time. Existence-Time has the virtue of passing in a series of moments. (Nishijima, 112).

In short, the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* theory states that because all existing things lack a permanent self, no existing thing can temporally endure longer than a moment. If phenomenal things were able to endure from one moment to the next, then the existence of such things would have temporal extension which would be distinct from other moments of temporal extension. As a result, these extended moments would provide the basis for our distinctions between different points and/or moments in time, and in turn warrant our belief that such differences are essentially inherent (i.e. they have *svabhāva*). Thus, the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* theory of momentariness argues that the arising and passing of phenomena are simultaneous. The moment each thing comes into existence, via the co-dependent matrix of reality, it ceases simultaneously. This simultaneous arising and cessation is defined as a moment.

> Thus, the moment in which a dharma acts, in which existence occurs, has no time span beyond itself. It is absolutely instantaneous, so short that it can only be said to mark the infinitely short time difference between the non-existence before its existence and the non-existence after its existence. To be is to cease. Cessation is the very nature of being, and is said to occur to a dharma through its very nature of existing. (Williams, 120)

According to these two schools, though the arising and cessation of a moment is simultaneous, time continues to unfold along a continuum of moments. In keeping with

the Buddhist teaching of dependent-origination, they argue that the manner by which this continuum unfolds is conditional. The past moment conditions the present, and the present conditions future. Because each moment is conditioned, it is without an individual essence.

Throughout the *Shōbōgenzō* Dōgen frequently alludes to this theory of simultaneous arising-ceasing.

> Presence is not related to having come, and absence is not related to having not come. Existence/Time is like this. Presence is restricted by presence itself; it is not restricted by absence. Absence is restricted by absence itself; it is not restricted by presence. (Nishijima, 117)

Or again in *Shinjin-Gakudō* he states:

> Cedar trees are restricted by cedar trees, but life is never restricted by death, for which reason it is the learning of the truth. Life is not the primary occurrence, and death is not the secondary one. Death does not oppose life does not oppose death. (Nishijima, 256)

Conventionally, we usually think of presence and absence as opposites. When something presents itself, we do not think of it as being absent, or when something is absent, we do not consider it to be present. However, for Dōgen, because things are empty, and thus do not endure from one moment to the next, the presence (i.e. affirmation) of existing things and their absence (i.e. negation) are simultaneous. Rather than restricting the presencing of things, absence allows presenting to come to its fruition. "Presence" presents itself through its absence; "absence" is absent within presence.

Though he appropriates this dialectical reading of momentariness, he does not treat it as some ultimate truth as the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* theorists do. For Dōgen, such momentary coming and going is nothing more than a conventional view. This point is well made in *Uji* when he states:

> The momentary passing of spring, for example, inevitably passes, moment by moment, through spring itself. It is not that the momentary passing of time is spring; rather, because spring is the momentary passing of time, passing time has already realized the truth in the here and now of springtime. We should research this in detail, returning to it and leaving it again and again. If we think, in discussing the momentary passing of time, that circumstances are only individual things on the outside, while something which can pass from moment to moment moves east through hundreds of thousands of worlds and through hundreds of thousands of *kalpas*, then we are not devoting ourselves solely to Buddhist learning in practice. (Nishijima, 114)

In this verse, Dōgen structures his criticism of momentariness around his examination of motion and temporal passage. For Dōgen, it is contradictory to hold a non-dual view of arising/cessation momentariness while at the same time arguing, as *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* thinkers do, that each moment in time conditions the next moment. If the arising and cessation of each moment were simultaneous, then no moment could ever abide in any way. Moreover, if no moment could ever abide in any way, it then follows that no moment could ever condition the existence of something else (i.e. moment) for how can a non-abiding thing condition the existence of anything in any way whatsoever (i.e. something cannot come from nothing). For Dōgen, because moments have no temporal duration, and the arising and cessation of each thing, such as a pine tree, are simultaneous, we cannot accept this view of temporal passage – unidirectional passage from the past to the present and on to the future – as some ultimate truth.

> Existence-Time has the virtue of passing in a series of moments. That is to say, from today it passes through a series of moments to tomorrow; from today, it passes through a series of moments to yesterday; from yesterday it passes through a series of moments to today; from today it passes through a series of moments to today; and from tomorrow, it passes a through a series of moments to tomorrow. Because passage through separate moments is a virtue of time, moments of the past and present are neither piled up one on top of another nor lined up in a row; and, for the same reason, Seigen is Time, Obaku is Time, and Kozei and Sekito are Time. (Nishijima, 112)

In this passage Dōgen argues that because each moment is non-abiding, every possible direction of temporal passage – including passage from past to present to future, from future to present to past, and from past to past, present to present and future to future – mutually interpenetrates each other to the point where Existence/Time is nothing more than the here and now of the present moment.

Pivoting from the *Kegon* "philosophy of totality," because all moments are empty of independent self-nature and are without any temporal duration, there is no ontological ground by which we can ultimately discriminate one moment of Existence-Time from the next. Contrary to our commonsense views, each moment of time mutually interpenetrates all other moments of time. Each moment of time is itself all moments of Existence/Time.

> We should learn in practice that, because of this truth, the whole earth includes myriad phenomenon and hundreds of things, and each phenomenon and each thing exists in the whole earth. Such toing-and-froing is a first step on the way of practice. When we arrive at the field of the ineffable, there is just one [concrete] thing and one [concrete] phenomena, here and now, [beyond] understanding of phenomena and non-understanding of phenomena, and [beyond] understanding of things, and non-understanding of things. Because [real existence] is only this exact moment, all moments of Existence-Time are the whole of Time, and all Existent things and all Existent phenomena are Time. The whole of Existence, the whole of the Universe, exists in individual moments of time. Let us pause to reflect whether or not any of the whole Existence or any of the whole Universe has leaked away from the present moment of Time. (Nishijima, 111).

Nothing stands outside of Existence/Time, which is itself the mutual interpenetration of all phenomenal beings, all cognitive thoughts and ideas, and all apparent moments of time within the present. Both the world of phenomenal beings and material bodies, as well as the world of cognitive thoughts and ideas, because they are empty of an individual self-nature, mutually interpenetrate each other throughout the "ten directions."

And, because they mutually interpenetrate each other, there is no metaphysical "ground" by which we can discriminate body moments from mind moments, mainly because neither exists independently form the other. Dōgen argues this point in *Juki* when he states:

> The fact of turning from one moment to the next cannot stop in any nook or cranny even for an instant, and body-and-mind everywhere rejoices incessantly. Joyful receiving of affirmation in onward turning from one moment to the next is always commonly experienced and everywhere explored with the mind. Furthermore, because the body everywhere pervades the mind and the mind everywhere pervades the body, the Sutra says "body-and-mind everywhere." Just this state is the whole world, the whole space in all directions, the whole body, and the whole mind. It is, in other words, a singular state and an individual case of rejoicing. (Nishijima, 204)

In this passage we can see how Dōgen unifies his non-dual standpoint on mind and body with his non-dual position on time. Though everyday experience lends itself to assumptions including temporal duration and temporal passage, such assumptions are only conventional. When considered from an ultimate standpoint, they are empty. As is noted in the above passage, all moments of all Existence (mind/body)/Time do not exceed beyond, nor "leak away from" the present moment. The present moment is all there "is," and, because it is instantaneous (simultaneously arising and ceasing) it is neither existent nor non-existent.

From this non-dualistic standpoint of time, Dōgen is able to take the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* theory of momentariness one step further, and in doing so, he is able to avoid the dualistic trap noted above, namely the distinction between the non-existence before and the non-existence after a *dharma* and/or thing has momentarily arisen. For Dōgen, since time is itself Being, and since each phenomenal being, because it is empty, mutually interpenetrates all other phenomenal beings, it follows that all temporal

moments, whose existence is without any temporal duration, mutually interpenetrate each other. If we accept the *Abhidharma* and *Yogācāra* view that each moment is dependently conditioned by preceding moments, then we cannot think of there being an independent moment of time for the same reasons why we cannot conceive of an independently existing phenomenal being (i.e. no thing can be both independent and dependent at the same "moment" in time). Thus, given that we cannot think of an independent moment of time, we cannot think of time as a linear sequence of extended moments.

Though Dōgen's non-dual standpoint on time – *Uji* – undercuts the duality between time and existence, thereby reconciling the problem of individual moments of time, he recognizes one last logical hurdle that needs to be examined and thus overcome: the duality between a dualistic/essentialist views of time whereby time is viewed as a distinct reality apart from existence and the world of beings, and a non-dual/nominalist view of time whereby time is not viewed as some independent reality apart from existence and/or the world of phenomenal beings. If Dōgen attempts to overcome the dualistic shortcomings of the essentialist view of time by simply proposing a non-dualistic alternative, he will fall into the trap of affirming a higher-level duality between dualistic views and non-dualistic views of time. Resulting from this higher-level duality, the philosophy of *Uji* itself would become an isolated view which can be set up against all other metaphysical views and ideas. This higher-level duality also gets extended to that of the Body and the mind. If Dōgen attempts to resolve the mind/body problem (i.e. mind/body duality) with a non-dualistic alternative, an alternative that states that because the mind and body are empty we cannot distinguish one from the other for that neither "really" exists anyhow, he would end up creating a higher-level duality between dualistic

and non-dualistic conceptions of body and mind. To get clear on how Dōgen overcomes this logical hurdle, we shall now turn our attention to *shinjin datsuraku.*

Chapter Four: Realizing *Shinjin Datsuraku*

In this chapter we shall clarify Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku* through his philosophy of zazen, particularly the ideas of turning back the radiance and non-thinking, which I contend to be inextricably linked. Here we shall learn how Dōgen extends his dialectical reflections on body, mind and time to that of meditative awareness/thinking (i.e. realization), which is, he argues, not separated from ordinary modes of awareness and/or thinking (i.e. delusion).

§1 *The if/then Logic of Shinjin Datsuraku*

As we proceed from our brief introduction into *shinjin datsuraku* in Chapter One, and more specifically of *shinjin* in Chapter Two, how can we understand the role which this idea – dropping off body and mind – plays in Dōgen's Zen and his philosophy of realizing – understanding and making real – the Buddhist truth which cuts off any and all boundaries between body, mind and time? To proceed in such questioning let us consider a popular verse in from *Genjō Kōan*.

> To learn the Buddha's truth is to learn ourselves. To learn ourselves is to forget ourselves. To forget ourselves is to be experienced by the myriad *dharmas*. To be experienced by the myriad *dharmas* is to let our own body-and-mind, and the body-and-mind of the external world, fall away. (Nishijima, 34)

In this passage we are presented with a set of if/then conditionals. According to Dōgen, if one wishes to realize the Buddha Dharma, then one must forget the self; if one forgets the self, then one will experience the myriad *dharmas* throughout the ten directions; and, if one wishes to experience the myriad *dharmas* throughout the ten directions, then one

must "drop-off" (*datsu*) and thereby "let go" (*raku*) the body-and-mind of oneself and others. This chain of if/then conditional links resonates with Guatama's description of reality as is presented through the lens of *pratitya-samutpada* (dependent-co-arising): "If that arises, this comes into being; if that comes in to being, then this will come to pass." In the case of the *Shōbōgenzō*, this if/then conditional chain can arguably be shortened to one if/then conditional: if one wishes to realize the Buddha Dharma, then one must drop off the mind-and-body of oneself and others.

The if/then conditionality off dropping off body and mind in Dōgen's writings is an extension of the Dharma lineage in which he is transmitting from China to Japan. Consider the following verses made by Hongzhi and Ju-ching.

> Silently dwell in the self, in true Suchness and abandon conditioning. Open minded and bright without defilement, simply penetrate and drop off everything. (Leighton, 10)
>
> Ju-ching said: Studying Zen is dropping off body and mind. Without depending on burning incense, bowing, chanting Buddhas names, repentance, or sutra reading, devote yourself to just sitting. (Tanahashi 10)
>
> Ju-ching said: To actualize Buddha ancestor's dropping off body and mind is the essence of this flexibility. That is why dropping off body and mind is called the mind seal of the Buddha ancestors. (Tanahashi 22)

The underlying premise of this lineage argues that though the body and mind are the hinges by which the gates of experience open and close, when we examine them thoroughly we cannot discover any traces of inherency or independence. There is nothing that is not dependently conditioned, there is nothing that is not changing moment-by-moment. Mind and body are themselves, through the opening and closing of each moment of Existence-Time, empty, and, because they are empty, they cannot

provide an inherent foundation for truly knowing the self and realizing the Buddha-Dharma. Dōgen conveys this premise in *Inmo*, "Thus."

> The situation of this supreme truth of *bodhi* is such that even the whole Universe in ten directions is just a small part of the supreme truth of *bodhi*: it may be that the truth of *bodhi* abounds beyond the Universe. We ourselves are tools which it possesses within this Universe in ten directions. How do we know that it exists? We know it is so because the body and mind both appear in the Universe, yet neither is our self. The body, already, is not "I." Its life moves on through the days and months, and we cannot stop it even for an instant. Where have the red faces [of our youth] gone? When we look for them, they have vanished without a trace. When we reflect carefully, there are many things in the past that we will never meet again. The sincere mind, too, does not stop, but goes and comes moment by moment. Although the state of sincerity does exist, it is not something that lingers in the vicinity of the personal self. (Nishijima, 120)

As we noted in the previous chapter, because mind and body present themselves through the moment-by-moment expanse of time, an expanse which is ultimately expanse-less, we are unable to locate, amongst anything cognitive or material, any inherent traces that endure one moment to the next. For Dōgen, if we are going to try and realize the Buddhist truth, we must understand that the mind and body are incapable of providing an ultimate foundation for realizing the "the state of sincerity" (i.e. the true nature of things as "it" is, *Inmo*). Thus, as we noted above, if we wish to realize the Buddha's truth, then we must drop off mind and body.

§2 *Zazen: A Practice*

How does one drop off body and mind, and what is the difference between body/mind before and body/mind after they have been dropped off? If we recall from earlier discussions on Dōgen's enlightenment experience, as well as some of the verses attributed to Ju-ching, it was noted that the whole experience of *shinjin datsuraku* was

dependent upon the practice of zazen – seated meditation. Throughout many of Dōgen's writings, both within the *Shōbōgenzō* and beyond, Dōgen consistently emphasizes the importance of zazen as being the single most important practice within Buddhism. The importance of this practice is twofold. On the one hand, part of the difference of Kamakura Buddhism, was to reorient its religious influence away from the aristocratic few, who were well learned in both Japanese and Chinese, to the lay majority who were occupied with everyday affairs including agriculture, craftsmanship and fishing. Zazen provided a simple practice that required neither a well-educated background in Buddhist doctrine nor a refined religious character that would have been cultivated through ritual training and ceremony. Secondly, zazen was considered by Dōgen to be the only practice by which the Buddha-Dharma could be realized. For example, consider the following passage from *Bendōwa*, "A Talk On Pursuing the Truth."

> [Someone] asks. "Why do you see it [*zazen*] as the only authentic gate. I say: The great Śākyamuni exactly transmitted, as the authentic tradition, this subtle method of grasping the state of truth, and the *tathāgatas* of the three times all attained the truth through *zazen*. Thus the fact that [zazen] is the authentic gate has been transmitted and received. Furthermore, the patriarchs of the Western Heavens and the Eastern lands all attained the truth through *zazen*. Therefore I am now preaching [*zazen*] to human beings and gods as the authentic gate. (Nishijima, 7)

In addition to *Bendōwa*, consider a passage from *Zazenshin*, "A Needle for Zazen," where Dōgen argues that the practice of seated meditation has been the binding force of the dharma lineage which has been transmitted – mind-to-mind transmission[22] – from Śākyamuni to Bodhidharma and onward.

> In general, in the Western Heavens and the Eastern lands, that the Buddha-Dharma has been transmitted has always meant that sitting Buddha has been transmitted. That is because [sitting Buddha] is the pivotal essence. When

[22] Mind to mind transmission is a technical term in Zen. On the surface it seems to imply *svabhāva* by setting up a uni-directional causal movement between two minds.

> the Buddha-Dharma has not been transmitted, sitting *dhyana* [*zazen*] has not been transmitted. What has been transmitted and received from rightful successor to rightful successor is only this principle of *zazen*. Those that have not received the one-to-one transmission of this principle are not Buddhist Patriarchs. (Nishijima, 99)

Or again in *Hotsu-Mujōshin*, "Establishment of the Will to the Supreme," he states that it is through *zazen* practice that *bodhi*-mind (enlightened mind) manifests.

> Sitting in zazen and pursuing the truth is the establishment of the *bodhi*-mind. Establishment of the *bodhi*-mind is beyond oneness and difference, and sitting in zazen is beyond oneness and difference; they are beyond repetition, and beyond division. All things should be investigated like this. (Nishijima, 259)

In addition to these claims, and in keeping with the Dharma lineage handed down from Ju-ching, Dōgen also defends the position that it is through zazen practice that the experience of *shinjin datsuraku* is actualized. This point is most clearly explicated in *Fukan-zazengi*, "Universal Guide to the Standard method of Meditation."

The *Fukan-zazengi* was the first essay Dōgen wrote upon his return from China to Japan in 1227. Composed in Chinese, then later in Japanese, the text provides the basic instructions on the technique of zazen vis-à-vis posture and bodily positioning.

> We usually spread a thick mat on the place where we sit, and use a round cushion on top of that. Either sit in the full lotus posture or sit in the half lotus posture. To sit in full lotus posture, first put the right foot on the left thigh, then put the left foot on the right thigh. To sit in half lotus posture, just press the left foot on to the right thigh. Spread clothing loosely and neat. Then put the right hand above the left foot, and place the left hand in the right palm. The thumbs meet and support each other. Just make the body right and sit up straight. Do not lean to the left, incline to the right, slouch forward or lean backward. The ears must be aligned with the shoulders, and the nose aligned with the navel. Hold the tongue against the palate, keep the lips and teeth closed, and keep the eyes open. Breathe softly through the nose. (Nishijima, 281)

In conjunction with these postures and respiratory exercises, the text also provides a short analogical description of the philosophical aspects that are woven through this practice,

and, how this practice, which is to be extended throughout one's everyday life of engagement and recline, conditions the experience of *shinjin datsuraku*. For example, consider the following verse.

> Therefore we should cease the intellectual work of studying sayings and chasing words. We should learn the backward step of turning light and reflecting. Body and mind will naturally fall away, and the original features will manifest themselves before us. (Nishijima, 280)

The image of "turning back" the light (Skt. *parāvritti*) (J. *ekō henshō*) is a popular image in *Mahāyāna* literature. In the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra*, the image signifies, according to D.T. Suzuki, a psychological/spiritual breakthrough into a state of non-duality, a state where one gains unmediated access (i.e. pure experience) to the *ālaya*-consciousness.

> This *Parāvritti*, according to the *Lankā*, takes place in the *Alaya-vijñāna* or All-conserving Mind, which is assumed to exist behind our individual empirical consciousness. The *Alaya* is a metaphysical entity, and no psychological analysis can reach it. What we ordinarily know as *Alaya* is its working through a relative mind. The Mahayana calls this phase of the *Alaya* tainted or defiled (*klishta*) and tells us to be cleansed of it in order to experience *Parāvritti* for the attainment of ultimate Reality. (Suzuki, xvii)

For example, consider the following verses from the *Lankāvatara*.

> [Relative] knowledge *(vijñāna)* takes place where there is something resembling an external world; [transcendental] knowledge (jñāna) belongs to the realm of Suchness. When turning-back (*parāvritti*) takes place, there is a state of imagelessness which is the realm of the wise. (Suzuki, 238)

> Discrimination not rising, there is a turning-back (*parāvritti*) and there is no dependence on anything. (Suzuki, 273)

> When there is revulsion (*parāvritti*) from discrimination, one is removed from death and destruction. (Suzuki 294)

> [The Buddhist doctrine is this:] Mahamati, when a [psychological] revulsion takes place in *Yogins* [by transcendence of] the *citta, manas*, and *vijñāna*, they cast off dualistic discrimination of grasped and grasping in what is seen of mind itself and entering the *tathāgata*-stage, attain the realization of noble wisdom; and in this there is no thought of existence and non-existence. (Suzuki, 81)

In the *Ch'an* tradition, Shitou Xiqian (700-790), one of the early proponents for what is popularly characterized amongst *Sōtō* Zen adherents as "silent illumination" zazen, speaks of this technique of "turning back the radiant light" in his poem, "Song of the Grass-Roof Hermitage" (Leighton, 91).

> Turn around the light to shine within, then just return.
> The vast inconceivable source can't be faced or turned away from.
> Meet the ancestral teachers, be familiar with their instruction,
> Bind grasses to build a hut, don't give up. (Leighton 58)

According to Taigen Daniel Leighton, Shitou had a great influence upon Zen Master Hongzhi whose poetry and prose on silent illumination meditation repeatedly emphasizes this backward step of turning light and reflecting.

> Vast and spacious, like sky and water merging during autumn, like snow and moon having the same color, this field is without boundary, beyond direction, magnificently one entity without edge or seam. Further, when you turn within and drop off everything completely, realization occurs. (Leighton, 8)

> A patched robed monk's authentic task is to practice the essence, in each minute event carefully discerning the shining source radiant without discrimination, one color unstained. You must keep turning inward, then [the source] is apprehended. (Leighton, 10)

> With the depths clear, utterly silent, thoroughly illuminate the source, empty and spirited, vast and bright. Even though you have lucidly scrutinized your image and no shadow or echo meets it, searching throughout you see that you still have distinguished between the merits of a hundred undertakings. Then you must take the backward step and directly reach the middle of the circle from where light issues forth. (Leighton, 16)

The resemblance between many of these passages and Dōgen's instructions in the *Fukan-zazengi* must not go unnoticed, specifically the connection between turning back the radiant light and the dropping off of dualistic views.

§3 Turning Back the Radiance: Some Reflections on Awareness & Realization

What does this image of "turning-back the light" represent? Consider the image of a lamp. When a lamp is lit, the light of the flame is able to illuminate the things that are spatially divided throughout the ten directions of its own radiance, while at the same time illuminating its own form of "flickering." In the same manner, the mind and its radiating awareness is able to illuminate the objective world, including mountains and streams, while illuminating itself. The mind is, in other words, both aware of objective things and aware of its own awareness.

This two-fold model of awareness and/or cognizing, objective awareness and self-awareness, is originally attributed to the Buddha who states in the *Agama* sutras: "The Blessed One said: Color-form is cognized, Oh monks, by twofold cognition, the visual perception and the mental perception induced by it" (Kajiyama, 47). While visual perception corresponds to the illumination/awareness of the many forms that surround the lamp, mental perception corresponds to the self-awareness and/or awareness of awareness. Following the death of the Buddha and the development of Buddhist scholasticism, this two-fold model of awareness was further systematized by the Buddhist epistemologists and *Yogācāra* logicians, including Dignāga (5th century), Dharmakīrti (7th century) and Moksākaragupta (11th century). Within their writings we find many passages that argue that cognitive knowledge, or awareness, is of two kinds: objective cognition and self-cognition. For example, consider these passages from Moksākaragupta's treatise *The Language of Logic* (Skt. *Tarkabhāsā*), a treatise which is intended to clarify the epistemological commitments of both Dignāga and Dharmakīrti (Kaijiyama, 4).

> All cognitions (*citta*) and feelings (*caitta*) are self-cognizant; this is called self consciousness (*svasamvedana*). Cognition or consciousness in general is

> knowledge grasping the object in its general aspect. Feeling or mental activity stands for what occurs in the mind; it cognizes specific aspects of the object and is characterized by pleasure, pain or indifference.
>
> Self-consciousness is that form of cognition by which the self of all cognitions and feeling is cognized; it is called a kind of indeterminate knowledge free from fictional constructs and unerring, because its nature consists in direct intuition of the nature of itself. (Kajiyama, 47)

Beginning with the everyday conventional mode of awareness, objective awareness takes concepts, which are framed out in language and dualistic categories, as its object of knowing. For example, rather than experiencing a chaotic stream of sense datum including colors, sounds and tactile forms, the mind is able to conceptually frame the objective world into well-ordered conceptual groupings such as "mountains," "streams," "trees," "birds" and "flowers." However, because these groupings are believed to be predicated on some individual self-nature which allows us to distinguish one conceptual grouping from the next, they argue that this mode of knowing and/or cognizing is of a lesser status (i.e. conventional) because it is mediated through language. When we extend these insights to our everyday world of experience, the dualistic nature of this kind of knowing leads us to discriminate between subjects and objects, grasper and grasped. Owing to this metaphysical divide, objective awareness was rendered defiled since it assumes the existence of a self (Skt. *ātman*).

Contrary to this defiled mode, self-awareness is free from conceptual constructions or groupings. It is a non-dual mode of awareness which has itself as its own object. One argument that Moksākaragupta puts forth in support of this idea is that our awareness of objects must also be aware of itself for how could a subject that is unaware of its own cognizing be aware of any object and/or conceptual construct?

> Furthermore, if knowledge were not self-cognizant, then we would not be able to state the judgment that the object is known, because of the accepted principle that cognition the qualifier of which is cognized does not occur in an object, which is the qualificand. For in cognition the object is qualificand; the state of being known is the qualifier. And 'known' means 'qualified by knowledge.' If knowledge itself is not apprehended through its self-luminosity, how then can the object qualified by the knowledge be apprehended? It is logically impossible that we can cognize a stick holder without cognizing the stick. (Kajiyama, 49)

This argument leads Moksākaragupta to the same analogical conclusion that we considered above, "As a lamp illuminates itself, so is also knowledge considered to know itself since it is, quite different from insentient things (*jadapadārtha*), produced by its own cause with the nature of self-luminosity" (Kajiyama, 48). Extending this analogy to our everyday world of experience, when a subject of experience is carrying water, he/she is aware of pails filled with splashing water, while at the same time being aware of the awareness itself. Or again, when a subject is lugging firewood, one is aware of the wheel barrel and logs, and, aware of the awareness itself.

Unlike objective modes of awareness, *Yogācāra* and *Tagatāgarbha* thinkers argue that self-awareness is pure undefiled Buddha nature. It is the non-dual *Alayavijñāna*.

> But when a revulsion [or turning back] has not taken place in the Alayavijñāna known under the name of Tathāgata-garbha, there is no cessation of the seven evolving Vijñānas. Why? Because the evolutions of the Vijñānas is depending on this cause; but this does not belong to the realm of Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddha, and those who are disciplining themselves in the exercises of the philosophers. As they only know the egolessness of the self-soul, as they only accepts the individuality and generality of the the Skandhas, Dhātus, and Ayatanas, there is the evolving of the Tathāgata-garbha. (Suzuki, 191)

> Mahāmati, this realm of the Tathāgata-garbha is primarily undefiled and is beyond all the speculative theories of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and philosophers; but it appears to them devoid of purity, as it is soiled by these external defilements. This is not the case with the Tathāgatas, Mahāmati; with the Tathāgatas it is an intuitive experience as if it were an Amalaka fruit held in the palm of the hand. (Suzuki, 192)

> They are not aware, Mahāmati, of the fact that Nirvana is the Alayavijñāna where a revulsion takes place by self-realization. Therefore, Mahāmati, those who are stupid talk of trinity of vehicles and not of the state of Mind-only where there are no images. Therefore, Mahāmati, those who do not understand the teachings of the Tathāgatas of the past, present and future, concerning the external world, which is of the Mind itself, cling to the notion that there is a world outside what is seen of the Mind and, Mahāmati, go on rolling themselves along the wheel of birth-and-death. (Suzuki, 55)

These thinkers argue that in order to attain this non-dual mode of awareness one must redirect his or her attention away from dualistic categories and objects of awareness and direct it towards itself (i.e. revulsion, turning back the radiance). Upon successfully doing so through meditation, one is then able to abide in the luminous expanse of Buddha-hood whose radiance is free from any and all conceptual thought coverings. Herein, it is said that Buddha-nature is realized.

Though Dōgen appropriates the image of turning back the radiance, along with many of the philosophical ideas it represents, I contend that he proposes a different reading which is free from the fetters of essentialism. To understand this alternative reading, we shall consider the ideas of dualistic/objective-awareness and non-dual/self-awareness in light of Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on realization, and then again on thinking. Beginning with former, consider this passage from *Daigo* (Realization):

> Thereupon, with regard to "realization," Kyozan has said, "what can I do about falling into the second consciousness?" He is thus saying that the second consciousness also is realization. By "the second consciousness," he seems to mean "I have become realization," or "I have attained realization," or "realization has come." He is saying that even "I have become" and even "it has come" are realization. So while regretting the fact that falling into the second consciousness, he seems to be denying that second consciousness exists! Second consciousness produced from realization, at the same time, may be taken to be true second consciousness. In that case, even if it is second consciousness, and even if it is consciousness divided into hundreds of thousands, it may be the state of realization. It is not true that for the second consciousness to exist, it must be left over from previously existing primary

> consciousness. For example, while I see the I of yesterday as myself, yesterday I called the I of today a second person. We do not say that present realization was not there yesterday; neither has it begun now. We should grasp in experience like this. In sum, heads of great realization are black, and heads of great realization are white. (Nishijima, 90)

In this passage we find Dōgen examining the idea of realization through the twofold awareness model where Buddha-nature/enlightenment is equated with self-awareness (second consciousness) and is thus believed to be independent from all conceptual traces that are woven through objective modes of awareness (primary consciousness). Pivoting from his standpoint on time, which is presented earlier in the same essay, "The present moment of which he speaks is the now of every person. Although instances of causing ourselves to think of the past, the present, and the future occur in thousand and tens of thousands, even they are present moment" (Nishijima, 89), we must ask, are objective awareness (deluded consciousness) and self-awareness (realization) simultaneous moments in time or not? If they are, then we have no way of distinguishing between the two; and, if there is no distinction between the two, we cannot argue that Buddha-nature/self-awareness is independent from the conceptual traces of objective awareness. On the other hand, if they are not simultaneous, and they abide in separate moments, then we must subsequently ask how the two different modes of awareness and their respective states of realization and delusion relate? How does one progress from a deluded mode of being to a state of realization? Because any explanation of a connecting state between the two modes of awareness leads to an infinite regress, such a view is untenable.

These points are emphasized further in the same essay when he asks us to consider the following dialogue.

> Great Master Hochi of *Kegon-ji* temple in *Keicho* on one occasion is asked by a monk: "What is it like at the time when a person in the state of great

> realization returns to delusion?" The Master says, "A broken mirror does not again reflect. Fallen blossoms cannot climb back onto the trees." (Nishijima, 86)

Upon examining this dialogue, Dōgen states:

> "A person in the state of great realization" is not intrinsically in great realization and is not hoarding a great realization realized eternally. It is not that, in old age, [the person] meets with a great realization [already] present in the public world. [People of great realization] do not forcibly drag it out of themselves, but they unfailingly realize great realization. We do not see "not being deluded" as great realization. (Nishijima, 86)

And then, continuing on from this point he asks us to consider the following questions:

> The question "What is it like at the time when a person in the state of great realization returns to delusion?" truly asks a question that deserves to be asked. And Kegon does not hate the question; he venerates the ancient ways of the forest orders – his conduct may be the meritorious conduct of a Buddhist patriarch. Let us consider for a while, is the return to delusion of a person in the state of great realization completely the same as a person in the unenlightened state? At the moment when a person in the state of great realization returns to delusion, is [that person] taking great realization and making it into delusion? Does [the person] return to delusion by bringing delusion from a distant place and covering great realization? Or does the person in the state of great realization, while remaining a whole person and not breaking great realization, nevertheless partake in the return to delusion? Again, does "the return to delusion of a person in the state of great realization" describe as "returning to delusion" the bringing forth of a further instance of great realization? We must master [these questions] one by one. Alternatively, is it that great realization is one hand, and returning to delusion is one hand? In any case, we should know that the ultimate conclusion of our study up to now is to hear that a person in the state of great realization experiences returning to delusion. We should know that there is great realization which makes returning to delusion a familiar experience. (Nishijima, 86-87)

In this dialogue and the passages that subsequently follow, Dōgen extends the classical *Mādhayamaka* position of *samsāra* is itself *nirvāna* to his reflections on realization and his examination of the relationship between objective awareness (duality) and self-awareness (non-duality). The logic of this position states that because all things lack an independent self-nature, we cannot think of enlightenment/realization and delusion as

two separate modes of existing or modes of being. We cannot coherently assume that Buddha-nature, or enlightenment, abides within some non-dual consciousness which is completely detached from some dualistic consciousness whose soul content of awareness consists of objective phenomena. For Dōgen, as he states in his essay *Hotsu-Bodaishin*, "Establishment of the Bodhi-Mind," the two are rather dependent.

> Among these, the *bodhi*-mind is inevitably established relying upon thinking mind. *Bodhi* is the sound of an Indian word; here it is called the truth. *Citta* is the sound of an Indian word; here it is called "thinking mind." Without this thinking mind it is impossible to establish the *bodhi*-mind. This is not to say that this thinking mind is the *bodhi*-mind itself, but we establish the *bodhi*-mind with this thinking mind. (Nishijima, 266)

One mode of consciousness/awareness does not exclude the other, but instead contains the other.

As the passage above indicates, Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on awareness-realization can be extended to his reflections on thinking. Consider this dialogue from Zazenshin, "A Needle for Zazen."

> While Great Master Yakusan Kodo is sitting, a monk asks him, "What are you thinking in the still-still state?" The Master says, "Thinking the concrete state of not thinking." The monk says, "How can the state of not thinking be thought?" The master says, "It is non-thinking." (Nishijima, II 91)

Dōgen comments on this dialogue by raising several questions:

> The monk says, "How can the state of not thinking be thought?" Truly, although the state of not thinking is ancient, still it is "How can it be thought about!" In the still-still state how could it be impossible for thinking to exist? And why do people not understand the ascendancy of the still-still state? If they were not stupid people of vulgar recent times, they might possess the power, and might possess the thinking, to ask about the still-still state. The Great Master says, "It is non-thinking." This use of non-thinking is brilliant; at the same time, whenever we think the state of not thinking, we are inevitably using non-thinking. In non-thinking there is someone, and that someone is maintaining and relying upon me. The still-still state, although it is I, is not only thinking: it is holding up the head of the still-still state. Even

> though the still-still state is the still-still state, how can the still-still state think the still-still state? (Nishijima, II 92)

In this passage we are presented with three modes of thinking: thinking, not thinking and non-thinking. Proceeding with the first mode, thinking, our everyday world of experience, such as carrying water and lugging firewood, is colored by thoughts that are structured and organized by language. Our thinking minds divide the world up into dualities of subject and object, yours and mine, universals and particulars. Herein, things are assumed to have *svabhāva.*

Not thinking is the negation of the former, which I contend to be an extension of the *Yogācāra and Tathāgata-garbha* idea of self-awareness. Pivoting from a first-order interpretation of *śūnyatā* logic, one realizes that all things, discriminations, concepts and views are without independent self-nature. They are empty, and because they are empty, we must not get caught up in dualistic thoughts for they will only confuse us about the true nature of things. Thus, *Tathāgata-garbha* thinkers contend that we should turn back the radiance upon itself and experience non-dual mode self-awareness, of not thinking. This non-dual mode is inherently pure and is potentially existent within all sentient beings.

Dōgen, however, cautions us not to think of not thinking as if it were some alternative mode of thinking (i.e. not thinking) which is devoid of dualistic thoughts and views of inherency.

> It is pitiful that such people spend a lifetime passing in succession from monasteries of the ten directions, and yet they have not experienced the effort of one sitting. Sitting is not in them; their effort does not meet with themselves at all. This is not because Zazen hates their own body and mind, but because they do not aspire to the genuine effort of Zazen, and they are quickly deluded. Their collections seem to only be about getting back to the

> source or returning to the origin, about vainly endeavoring to cease thought and become absorbed in serenity. (Nishijima, 100)

I contend that this cautionary statement is framed around the understanding that to pursue, via turning back the radiance, a mode of not thinking which is unfettered by the dualities of thinking (i.e. dualities which condition delusion and suffering) inevitably creates a higher level duality between thinking and not thinking. Failure to realize this point will thus lead one into a mode of crude negativism, which in turn becomes an affirmation of non-being.

Pivoting from Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā śūnyatā*, non-thinking is the Middle Way between the two extremes of thinking and not thinking; or in the case of awareness, objective awareness and self-awareness. In this mode, one does not try to negate dualistic distinctions or thoughts, but rather realizes that it is only through dualistic thinking that we are able to realize the still-still state where thoughts cannot reach. Our insight into the true nature of things which is beyond all thoughts, concepts and discriminations is itself dependent upon our having thoughts, concepts and discriminations. Within this "still-still" mode of non-thinking, one is able to experience the world of duality without attachment. Unlike the positive extreme of thinking where thoughts are affirmed as inherently existing, and the negative extreme of not thinking where thoughts are denied, non-thinking remains detached from the world of dualities without creating a higher level duality between thinking and not thinking. Such detachment ensues from understanding that dualities only exist because things are fundamentally non-dual. To realize the true nature of things which is beyond thought is to fully examine dualistic thoughts themselves. To turn back the radiant light of non-dual awareness and/or thought upon itself is to fully penetrate, or totally exert (J. *ippō-gūjin*),

each object of awareness and/or thought. Thus turning back is itself directing/penetrating forward.

Dōgen's philosophy of total exertion and/or penetration is an extension of Kegon's totalistic philosophy where, "every dharma in the world has its unique particularity, yet exists in such a way that it bears absolute significance: while being a single unique dharma, it is at once all dharmas and no-dharma" (Kim, 58). For example, in *Gabyo* Dōgen states:

> And in the moment of realization, the real manifestation of each – without impinging on the other – is realized. This is the very state of the ancestral founders. We must not confuse intellectual speculation about unity and diversity with their power of learning in practice. Therefore they say that "Barely to penetrate one dharma is to penetrate myriad of dharmas." The penetration of one dharma which they describe is not to rip away the features which one dharma has so far retained, is to make one dharma relative to another, and is not to make one dharma absolute – to make something absolute is to hinder it and be hindered by it. When penetration is freed from hindrance of penetration, one instance of penetration is myriad instances of penetration. One instance of penetration is one dharma, and penetration of one dharma is penetration of myriad dharmas. (Nishijima, 278)

As Kim notes, total exertion does not only concern things, such as stones and tools, abiding within there dharma positions (J. *jūhōi*) as stones and tools, but also encompasses our attentive awareness in zazen (Kim, 59).

> The reality of total exertion is thoroughly saturated with the principle of ascesis (namely, practice or discipline), privileging the latter over vision, not in order to deny seeing, but to explicate a deeper meaning, one that seeing itself is fundamentally creating and making. That is to say, seeing presupposes the vow or resolution on the part of the seer to create a new being or a new reality; hence it concerns itself not only with seeing things as they are but creating things as they are meant to be. This is why total exertion can properly be understood only against the background of the ascesis of zazen. It is to be enacted rather than envisioned. The ascesis of one dharma in total independence is itself the enactment of the *samādhi* of self-enjoyment (*jijuyū-zammai*), a sheer joyfulness of play (*yuge*), which casts off body-mind (*shinjin-datsuraku*) and in which practice and verification are non-dually one (*shushō-ittō; shushō-ichinyo*). (Kim 1985, 59)

For Dōgen, if we totally exert our attention upon a single dharma-position by turning back the radiance, we can realize the boundary-less-ness of existence through the boundaries that constitute the identity, the dharma positions, of all existing things. By exerting ourselves in zazen, one can obliterate the duality of subject and object by fully penetrating the dualistic divide between the two, and thus realize that the myriad contents of experience which are encompassed by the present moment are an extension of oneself, which is itself no-self. To experience, to think or to be aware of one thing, because it is not a thing, is to experience, think and be aware of all things. And because our awareness of things is dependent upon awareness being self-aware, it follows that to experience all things is to experience the self. "To study ourselves is to forget ourselves. To forget ourselves is to be experienced by the myriad dharmas" (Nishijima, I 34).

§4 *A Dialectic of Dropping Off Body and Mind*

Given that the image of turning back the radiance shares an if/then relationship with *shinjin datsuraku*, and because the image of turning back the radiance is logically framed by the *Mahāyāna* dialectic of *śūnyatā*, *shinjin datsuraku* must also be logically framed by the same dialectic. The reason for this is that if they were different, then no relationship between the two could ever be established.

What is Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku* which allows him to relate this axiom with the image of turning back the radiance and thus realize Buddha-nature. In his essay *Bendōwa*, Dōgen takes *shinjin datsuraku* to its dialectical extreme of *shinjin ichinyo*, oneness of body and mind. As noted in Chapter One, this dialectic is framed in response to the idealist views of the *Tathāgata-garbha* theorists which denies

the existence of material phenomena by defending the idealist position that when the body perishes the mind continues to abide eternally. Thus, to drop off mind and body is to affirm the oneness of body and mind.

> So remember, in the Buddha-Dharma, because the body and mind are originally one reality, the saying that the essence and form are not two has been understood equally in the Western Heavens and the Eastern Lands, and we should never dare go against it. Further, in the lineages that discuss the eternal existence, the myriad *dharmas* are all eternal existence: body and mind are not divided. And in the lineages that discuss extinction, all *dharmas* are extinction: essence and form are not divided. How could we say, on the contrary, that the body is mortal but the mind is eternal? Does that not violate right reason? Furthermore, we should realize that living-and-dying is just *nirvāna*; [Buddhists] have never discussed *nirvāna* outside of living-and-dying. Moreover, even if we wrongly imagine the understanding that mind becomes eternal by getting free from the body to be the same as the Buddha-wisdom which is free of life and death, the mind that is conscious of this understanding still appears and disappears momentarily, and so it is not eternal at all. Then isn't [this understanding] unreliable? We should taste and reflect. The principle that body and mind are one reality is being constantly spoken by the Buddha-Dharma. (Nishijima, 15)

According to Dōgen, since the mind and body are empty, we cannot "ultimately" locate an ontological boundary which separates one from the other. The only boundaries that exist are the ones in which we conceptually impose via language. Thus, it is because mind and body are one that they present themselves as two.

Chapter Five: Realizing Buddha-nature

In this chapter we shall examine how Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku* provides a conceptual bridge for understanding his soteriological commitments. Such an understanding will allow us to reconcile the problem of Buddha-nature that we addressed in chapter one: if all sentient beings have the Buddha-nature, why do we have to practice? And in the process of reconciliation we shall be able to put to rest the problem raised at the end of chapter three: does a non-dualistic view of time, *Uji*, create a higher level duality between dualistic views of time.

§1 *Conditions, Circumstances and the Impermanence of Life*

Let us return to a passage from *Genjō Kōan*, which we examined in Chapter Three, "And though it is like this, it is only that, flowers, while loved, fall; and weeds, while hated, flourish" (Nishijima, 33). This point is emphasized again in *Daigo* when he states:

> The actualization of an expression of the moment like this is: "A broken mirror does not again reflect. Fallen blossoms cannot climb back onto the trees." When fallen blossoms are just fallen blossoms, even if they are rising to the top of a hundred-foot pole, they are still fallen blossoms. Because a broken mirror is a broken mirror just here and now, however many vivid situations it realizes, each similarity is a reflection that does not again reflect. Picking up the point that is expressed as a mirror being broken and is expressed as blossoms being fallen, we should grasp in experience the moment when a person in the state of realization returns to delusion. (Nishijima, 88)

The images presented above allude to the Buddhist teachings of causal conditioning and impermanence. This teaching argues that there is nothing that is not causally dependent. There are no things that abide without conditions. Conditionality does not imply that

"things" inherently exist as independent entities; rather, causes and conditions only exist because they are empty. And, because all things are causally conditioned, and thus empty, they are impermanent. Peonies in spring, though mighty in their blooming, eventually wither and perish. A garden pathway in July, when neglected for just a short while, is quickly choked out by weeds. The foliage in autumn, though splendid in color, inescapably scatters and decays. Snow flakes in winter, though quietly falling over hemlocks and larches, sooner or later melt into slush and mud. Throughout the four seasons of our everyday lives, we cannot escape impermanence. We cannot escaping the transitory nature of life that so easily conditions sorrow, regret and loss.

However, for Dōgen, it is only through our everyday examination and reflections upon the world of causes and conditions (i.e. this world of impermanence), via dropping off body and mind, that we are able to realize Buddha-nature. Consider this passage from *Busshō*.

> This "wanting to know the meaning of Buddha-nature" does not only mean knowing. It means wanting to practice it, wanting to experience it, wanting to preach it, and wanting to forget it. Such preaching, practicing, experiencing, forgetting, misunderstanding, not misunderstanding, and so on, are all the causes and circumstances of real time. To reflect the causes and circumstances of real time is to reflect using the causes and circumstances of real time; it is mutual reflection through a whisk, a staff, and so on. On the basis of "imperfect wisdom," faultless wisdom," or the wisdom of original awakening," "fresh awakening," "free awakening," "right awakening," and so on, the causes and circumstances of real time can never be reflected. Just reflecting is not connected with the subject that reflects or the object that of reflection and it should not be equated with right reflection, wrong reflection, and the like: it is just reflection here and now. Because it is just reflection here and now, it is beyond subjective reflection and beyond objective reflection. It is the oneness of real time and causes and circumstances itself; it is transcendence of causes and circumstances; it is the Buddha-nature itself – the Buddha-nature rid of its own substance; it is Buddha as Buddha himself; and it is the natural function as the natural function itself. (Nishijima, 5)

In this passage, we can see that Dōgen frames his considerations upon "reflecting" around the same dialectical standpoint that we examined in *Genjō Kōan*: A is ~A therefore A. Through such dialectical maneuvering, he returns us to the everyday world of time and being, a world where everything is impermanent. Here we are able to begin accessing Dōgen's reading of Buddha-nature which is free from the traces of essentialism; and in doing so, allowing us to settle the problem noted in chapter one: if all beings have the Buddha-nature then why do we have to practice.

§2 *Reconciling the Problem of Inherent Buddha-Nature*

This problem, as we noted in chapter one, concerns the greater problem of practice and attainment. Dōgen presents this problem to us in *Busshō* when he *states*:

> But there is one group which thinks as follows: The Buddha-nature is like the seed of a plant or a tree. As the rain of Dharma waters it again and again, its buds and sprouts begin to grow. The twigs, leaves, flowers, and fruit abound, and the fruit once more bears the seeds. Views like this are the sentimental thinking of the common man. (Nishijima, 4)

Or again in the same essay when he states:

> People in many ages from the ancient past to the present have thought that the words "when the time has come…" are about waiting for a time in the future when the Buddha-nature is manifest before them. They think that continuing their practice with this attitude, they will naturally meet the time when the Buddha-nature is manifest before them. They say that, because the time has not come, even if they visit a teacher and ask for Dharma, and even if they pursue the truth and make effort, the Buddha-nature is not manifest before them. (Nishijima, 5)

To reconcile this quandary, Dōgen frames out his reflections on Buddha-nature in response to *Mahāparinirvāna* Sūtra:

> All living beings totally have the Buddha-nature:
> The Tathāgata abides in them constantly, without changing at all.

> This is the turning of the Dharma wheel, as a lion's roar, of our great Master Śākyamuni. At the same time it is the brains and eyes of all the buddhas and all the patriarchs. It has been learned in practice for 2,190 years, through barely fifty generations of rightful successors. Twenty-eight patriarchs in India have dwelt and maintained it from one generation to the next. Twenty-three patriarchs in China have dwelt in it and maintained it from one age to the next. The Buddhist patriarchs in the ten directions have each dwelt in it and maintained it. What is the point of the World-honored One's words that "All living beings totally exist as the Buddha-nature"? It is the words "This is something ineffable coming like this," turning the Dharma wheel. Those called "living beings," or called "sentient," or called "all forms of life," or called "all creatures," are living beings and are all forms of existence. In short, Total Existence is the Buddha-nature, and the perfect totality of Total Existence is called "living beings." At just this moment, the inside and outside of living beings are the Total Existence of the Buddha-nature. (Nishijima, 2)

In this passage, he takes the verse from the *Nirvāna Sūtra*, "All sentient beings totally have the Buddha-nature" (Nishijima, 2), and rearranges its syntactical components to eliminate the duality between Buddha-nature and sentient beings. From this syntactical rearrangement, he argues that, "Total Existence" is Buddha-nature" (Nishijima, 2).

> In the *Shōbōgenzō Busshō*, Dōgen takes the Nirvāna Sūtra passage *issai no shujō wa kotogotoku busshō ari* ("All sentient beings without exception have the Buddha-nature") and shifts the its syntactical components to read *issai shujō shitsuu busshō* ("All sentient being are all existence Buddha-nature"). The far reaching religious and philosophical implications of such distorted view readings are now well known to us. First, Buddha-nature as potentiality is construed as actuality, because sentient beings do not possess but are Buddha-nature; secondly, by being placed in apposition with "all existence," sentient beings are liberated from homocentrism as well as biocentrism; and thirdly, "sentient beings," "all existence," and "Buddha-nature" are all non-dually one, a notion which is described, in a different context but in typically Buddhist language, as: "though not identical, they are not different; though not different, they are not one; though not one, they are not many." (Kim 1985, 64)

Such syntactical rearrangement is, as Kim notes, a technique that Dōgen employs as a skillful means to give a new twist to the philosophical import of key Buddhist teachings.

In doing so he demonstrates that language, and the meaning of words, is not something static but rather dynamic and constantly changing.

> As we have already seen, Dōgen felt unconstrained by conventional Buddhist usage, or, for that matter, by secular traditions. This is clearly demonstrated by his method of arbitrarily regrouping linguistic components in a sentence, often in violation of Chinese syntactic rules. Given the expression "A-B-CDE" in Chinese, for example, Dōgen might reorganize it as "AB-CDE," jolting the conventional meaning of the original; alternatively, he might single out "BC." Meaningless in isolation in its original context, with Dōgen it would take on novel signification. Dōgen was a master of neologisms. This technique involved rearrangement of linguistic elements through syntactical reorganization. (Kim 1985, 64)

> Thus Dōgen probes the inner dynamics of concepts and symbols not as a means of intellectual speculation but as a way of realization. When linguistic experimentation and transformation are executed within the realizational milieu of total exertion, the results are truly remarkable, as we shall see shortly. Throughout the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen painstakenly dissects a given passage and explores its semantic possibilities at every turn, literally turning the conventional diction upside down and inside out. (Kim 1985, 60)

> Language and symbols circumscribe reality; but as living forces, they are dynamic enough to open up, constantly re-expressing, renewing, and casting off, so as to unfold new horizons of their own life. In this way language and symbols know no limits with respect to how far they can penetrate both conceptually and symbolically. (Kim 1985, 60)

Ultimately, the fact that language serves as medium for understanding and realizing Buddhist teachings, particularly *śūnyatā*, illustrates the point that emptiness and the true nature of things is not beyond language, logic and reason. Zen mysticism is not pre-linguistic. It is not illogical. It is simply carrying water and lugging firewood.

Dōgen's non-dual standpoint on Buddha-nature, "All Existence is Buddha-nature," does not imply that existence has a fixed and/or static nature which qualifies it as Buddha-nature. Instead, the underlying logic of Dōgen's model is affirmed through its dialectical negation: Buddha nature is itself *mu*-Buddha-nature (i.e. nothingness Buddha-nature), or without Buddha-nature. Consider these passages from *Busshō*.

> The fifth Patriarch says, "The Buddha-nature is emptiness, so we call it being without." This clearly expresses that emptiness is not non-existence. To express that the Buddha-nature is emptiness, we do not say it is half a pound and we do not say it is eight ounces, but we use the words "being without." We do not call it "emptiness" because it is void, and we do not call it "being without" because it does not exist; because the Buddha-nature is emptiness we call it "being without." So real instances of being without are the standard for expressing "emptiness," and emptiness has the power to express "being without." This emptiness is beyond the emptiness of "matter is just emptiness." At the same time, "matter is just emptiness" describes neither matter being forcibly made into emptiness nor emptiness being divided up to produce matter. It may describe emptiness in which emptiness is just emptiness. "Emptiness in which "emptiness is just emptiness" describes one stone in space. This being so, the fourth patriarch and the fifth patriarch pose questions and make assertions about the Buddha-nature being without, about the Buddha-nature as emptiness, and about the Buddha-nature as Existence. (Nishijima, 10)

> Sometimes following good counselors and sometimes following the sutras, what we should be glad to hear is "living beings, being without, are the Buddha-nature." Those who are not satisfied in seeing, hearing, realizing, and knowing that "All living beings, being without, are the Buddha-nature," have never seen, heard, realized, or known the Buddha-nature. When the sixth patriarch earnestly seeks to become Buddha, the fifth patriarch is able to make the sixth patriarch become Buddha – without any other expression and without any other skillful means – just by saying "A man from south of the Peaks, being without, is the Buddha-nature." Remember, saying and hearing the words "being without the Buddha-nature" is the direct path to becoming Buddha. In sum, just at the moment of being without the Buddha-nature, we become Buddha at once. Those who have neither seen and heard nor expressed being without the Buddha-nature have not become Buddha. (Nishijima, 12)

For Dōgen, because Buddha-nature is emptiness and thus non-dual, "it" (i.e. Buddha-nature) is only realized through dualisms, including subject and object, body and mind. Buddha-nature is not some thing that exists at some other moment in time that is different from the here and now of the present which is filled with forms and dualities. Instead, the entirety of existence is, right here and now, Buddha-nature.

> Everyday saints are that without constancy and everyday commoners are that without constancy. The idea that everyday commoners and saints cannot be the Buddha-nature may be a stupid view of small thinking and a narrow view

> of the intellect. Buddha is a bit of body, and nature is a bit of action. On this basis, the sixth patriarch says, "that without constancy is the Buddha-nature." The constant is the unchanging. The meaning of the "the unchanging" is as follows: even though we turn it into the separating subject and transform it into the separated object, because it is not necessarily connected with the traces of leaving and coming, it is the constant. In sum, that without constancy of grass, trees, and forests is just the Buddha-nature. And that without constancy of the body-and-mind of a human being is the Buddha-nature itself. National lands and mountains and rivers are that without constancy because they are Buddha-nature. (Nishijima, 14)

Our realization of this truth (Buddha-nature) in the "here and now" of the present moment, which is instantaneous Being/Time, is dependent upon a thorough examination of things and dualities passing in and out time. Our realization of timelessness, where all things are understood to exist in the present moment, is dependent upon there being actual moments in time. As we noted earlier in our reflections on Buddha-nature, such realization is simply observable through close examination of the causes and conditions that present themselves throughout everyday affairs and happenings. This point allows us to reconcile the problem we encountered at the end of Chapter Three: does Dōgen's non-dual view of Being/Time create a higher level duality between dualistic views of time and its own non-dual standpoint? I contend it does not given that it is only through our examination of impermanence and the momentary passing of things in and out time (duality) that we realize *Uji* (non-duality) (i.e. Buddha-nature).

As we noted in the *Fukanzazengi*, the technique by which we actualize this truth which is beyond all boundaries of time and space, is by dropping off body and mind via affirming the non-dual unity of body and mind – subject and object – through the practice of zazen, a practice that is to meant to be extended throughout all postures of one's daily affairs.

> Just sit and get the state which is free of body and mind. If a human being for a single moment manifests the Buddha's posture in the three forms of conduct, while that person sits up straight in *samādhi,* the entire world of Dharma assumes the Buddha's posture and the whole of space becomes the state of realization. The practice thus increases the Dharma-joy that is the original state of the Buddha-*tathāgatas*, and renews the splendor of their realization of truth. Furthermore, throughout the Dharma-worlds in ten directions, ordinary beings of the three states and the six states, all become clear and pure in body-and-mind at once; they experience the state of the great liberation, and their original features appear. Then all *dharmas* experience and understand right realization and myriad things each put their Buddhist body into practice; in an instant, they totally transcend the limits of experience and understanding; they sit erect as kings of the *Bodhi* tree; in one moment, they turn the great Dharma-wheel which is in the unequaled state of equilibrium; and they expound the ultimate, unadorned and profound state of prajña. (Nishijima, 5)

Pivoting from his reflections on time, Dōgen's technique, and/or practice of zazen, does not, ultimately, distinguish between means and ends, practice and attainment. Pivoting from our reflections on *Daigō* in Chapter Four, given that we cannot locate any inherent differences between the moment before and the moment after one has progressed from a state of delusion to realization, we cannot accept the view of acquired enlightenment which discriminates between practice and attainment. This does not suggest that practice is meaningless and thus we should not exert ourselves in meditation. By taking *śūnyatā* logic to its rational end, it follows that it is only through practice that we can realize that there is nothing to be attained. Because there is no Buddha-nature that is attainable outside of the here and now of practicing, it is through practice alone that Buddha-nature is realized. Practice is its own attainment.

> When we solely sit in Zazen, on the other hand, relying now on exactly the same posture as the Buddha, and letting go of the myriad things, then we go beyond the areas of delusion, realization, emotion, and consideration, and we are not concerned with the ways of the common and the sacred. (Nishijima, 10)

> The grass, trees, soil, and earth reached by this guiding influence all radiate great brightness, and their preaching of the deep and fine Dharma is without end. Grass, trees, fences, and walls become able to preach for all should, both

> common people and saints; and conversely, all souls, both common people and saints, preach for grass, trees, fences, and walls. The world of self-consciousness, and the world of consciousness of external objects, lack nothing – they are already furnished with the concrete form of real experience. The standard state of real experience, when activated, allows no idle moment. Zazen, even if it is only one human being sitting for one moment, thus enters into mystical co-operation with all dharmas, and completely penetrates all times; and it therefore performs, within the limtless Universe, the eternal work of the Buddha's guiding influence in the past, future, and present. For everyone, it is completely the same practice and the same experience. The practice is not confined to the sitting itself; it strikes space and resonates, like ringing that continues before and after a bell. How could the practice be limited to this place? (Nishijima, 6)

Thus, by turning back the radiance (J. *eko henshō*) and dropping off body and mind (J. *shinjin datsuraku*), one is able to fully penetrate (J. *ippō-gujin*) each and every thing through the non-dual unity of body and mind (J. *shinjin-ichinyo*), and make real the "truth" of the Dhamra-Eye, a truth without Buddha.

Chapter Six: Concluding Remarks

The objective of this paper was to get clear on the philosophical import of Dōgen's philosophy of *shinjin datsuraku* through his dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā*; and in doing so, clarify Dōgen's: 1) connection with Nāgārjuna; 2) dialectical standpoint on the mind, body and time; 3) philosophy of zazen and its relationship with *shinjin datsuraku*; 4) soteriological views and philosophy of Buddha-nature. We launched this project in Chapter One when we explored Dōgen's early career as a monk and the philosophical ideas with which he wrestled, particularly the teaching of inherent Buddha-nature. Here we noted the problems Dōgen encountered with this teaching (i.e. the duality of practice and attainment, delusion and enlightenment). By tracing his quest to reconcile these problems from Japan to China where he earned dharma transmission from Ju-ching, we were able to historically locate the significance which the idea of *shinjin datsuraku* held in Dōgen's Zen.

From this historical examination, in Chapter Two we proceeded to look into the philosophical import which *shinjin datsuraku* retains. After noting some of the hermeneutical issues that surround a fair and charitable reading of Dōgen's writings, particularly in the *Shōbōgenzō*, we charged ahead with a close examination of Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *śūnyatā* (A is ~A therefore A) which is woven throughout many of his essays. We learned that the conceptual architecture of Dōgen's dialectical standpoint is closely tied to both the *Prajñā pāramitā Sūtras* and Nāgārjuna's philosophy of *śūnyatā śūnyatā*. And, we noted that like Nāgārjuna, Dōgen seeks to realize a Middle Way between the metaphysical extremes of essentialism and nihilism. However, unlike

Nāgārjuna, who frames many of his verses around a two-fold truth system, Dōgen structures his dialectic around a three-fold system of truth. The main reason for this, as we noted in Chapter Five, is to express his soteriological leanings (i.e. impermanence).

From this examination we were then able in Chapter Three to see how Dōgen's dialectic helps us to get clear on his philosophical position on mind, body and time. By examining key passages from the *Shōbōgenzō* we learned that Dōgen's standpoint on mind and body is dependent upon a clear understanding of time and vice versa. As a result of examining these three issues through his dialectical lens, we learned that his Zen philosophy sweeps away all traces of essentialism that could reify the mind, body or time as individual things that inherently exist. Subsequent to these reflections, we were able to detect a problem that arises when one attempts to negate duality by providing a non-dual alternative: non-duality creates a higher level duality between duality and non-duality.

In our attempt to reconcile this problem, we then proceeded towards a close examination of *shinjin datsuraku* in Chapter Four. We began by considering the historical background of *shinjin datsuraku,* and some of the analogical teachings that are associated with it, specifically that of "turning back the radiance." By examining these teachings in light of Dōgen's dialectical standpoint, we were able to see how he formulates a dialectic model of awareness which is contingent upon zazen: our awareness is only aware of itself (non-dual awareness) through our awareness of other things (dualistic awareness). To turn back the radiance and realize the non-dual mind is to totally exert our attention forward upon each and every dharma position. Through this non-dual model of meditative awareness we were then able to get clear on Dōgen's dialectical standpoint on *shinjin datsuraku*: dropping off body mind is itself an

affirmation of the oneness of body and mind (J. *shinjin ichinyo*). This dialectic thus argues that the dualities, such as body and mind, only exist because they are empty.

Pivoting from these dialectical reflections, in Chapter Five we were then able to reconcile the problems noted in Chapter One: if all beings have the Buddha-nature originally, why do we have to practice? And again in chapter three: to negate dualistic views of time through a non-dualistic alternative creates a higher level duality. In the case of the former, we learned that according to Dōgen, Buddha-nature is to be realized, via *zazen*, amongst the world of impermanence and the conditional arising and perishing of things. For Dōgen, Buddha-nature is itself emptiness, and it does not exist apart from the dualities of everyday life despite their tendency to disappoint and frustrate our well-being. Our insight into non-duality, which is timeless Being/Time, is dependent upon there being actual moments in time. And because Buddha-nature is not some object of attainment, we must not think that our everyday practice is to be geared toward some goal or end. Rather, our practice in the here and now of each moment is itself its own attainment; our practice in the here and now is "realizing of Buddha-nature."

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